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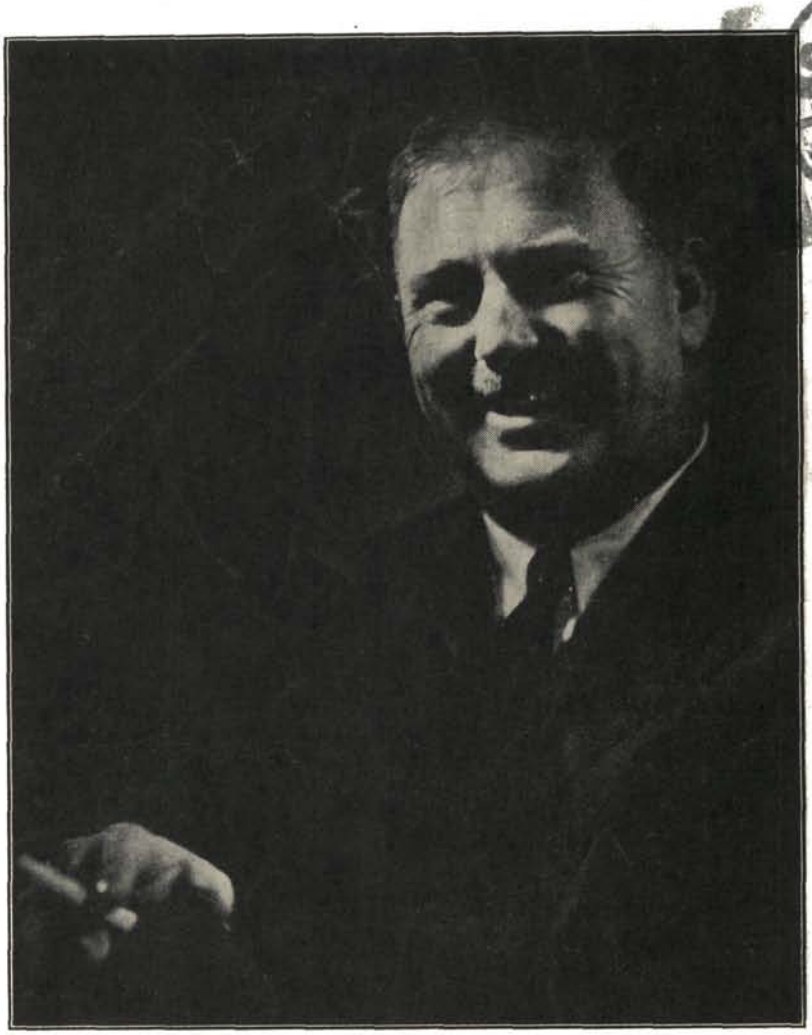

Don Wallace

PAUL DE KRUIF

"'It costs money to die' is his slogan" . . . *(See page 5)*

MEETING IN AMRICANTE *By Norman Collins*

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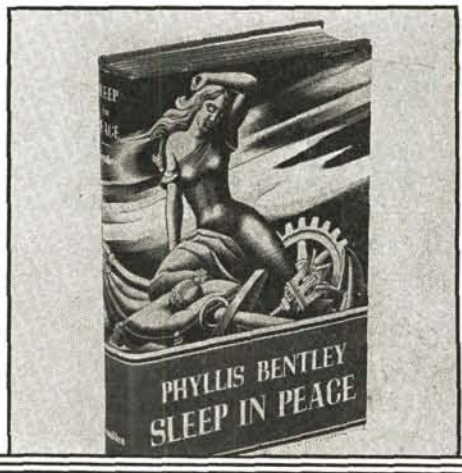

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Fiction of the Bayou Country

BY ARLIN TURNER

SOUTHERN fiction has come to be identified with Civil War novels — the usual formula for which is to show how the Golden Age of the Old South was blasted by the war between the states and was followed by decades of heroic poverty and a fruitless attempt to throw off the enslaving industrialism imposed by Northern capital. Though such a thesis may be wholly sound, these novels have as a rule exaggerated the inherent faults of regionalism, have flaunted a militant bias of such rabid sectionalism as to cancel, for the most part, whatever might be gained by the portrayal of a distinctly individual civilization.

Paramount Pictures

LOUISIANA BAYOU

From Cecil B. DeMille's production, "The Buccaneer."

Louisiana has supplied its quota to the recent and current deluge of fiction about the South. But among recent works not one follows the prevailing pattern, and there is not a single attempt to refight the Civil War. Explaining this phenomenon is not difficult. The background of the Louisiana population—international, rather than national or sectional—supplies part of the answer. It is true that the Louisianians were as loyal to the Confederacy and as generous in their sacrifices as any in the South; that they contributed to the cause General Beauregard, "the great Creole"; that the Northern forces occupied New Orleans during most of the war period; that the Union commander's insult to the natives of the city was perhaps the greatest recorded in the annals of the whole struggle. But the whimsies of political and military fortune could hold little shock for the residents of a land which had been handed back and forth as a pawn between the kings of France and Spain and finally had been sold to the hated Americans. And adjustments came easy in homes which kept alive the story of the Acadian exile. More significant still, the Creoles, the Cajuns, and most of the other Louisianians have long had in their natures such an unshakable complacency and profound sense of well-being, such a devotion to the enjoyment of life in the present, that they are not easily influenced to reopen a struggle which was closed three-quarters of a century ago. And, too, was not the same Sherman who was so "careless with fire" in Georgia the first president of what is now the Louisiana State University?

Furthermore, Louisiana novelists have not belabored the issues of the Civil War because they are in possession of material vastly more salty and challenging and far less shopworn than the War can possibly afford. This is to some extent true of the entire South, for that matter, but most especially of Louisiana. The region has a long history, stretching downward from the founding of New Orleans by Sieur de Bienville, about 1718; and one has only to read the writings by Charles Étienne Gayarré and Alcée Fortier to realize the possibilities for a literature based on history and legend. Louisiana has no little of the vague past and the misty traditions which Hawthorne lamented that the American romancer could not find on this continent. There is New Orleans, once labeled "the city of sin," with a history that runs the gamut from sublime romance to smelly sordidness; with its Basin Street, its Storyville, its Mardi Gras, its annals of devastating epidemics of the yellow fever; with its opera-houses, its duelling oaks, its Quadroon Balls, its rollicking and lawless "Swamp," its avenues of magnolias and camellias and azaleas and palms and oleanders; with its Creole aristocracy that formed its first impression of Americans from the flat-boatmen from "Kaintuck," and did not alter that impression for half a century.

Then there is the Evangeline country, replete with history and legends of a civilization rudely transplanted from the Acadian shore to this semi-tropical land of swamps. Jean Baptiste, among his muskrat traps and in his shrimping lugger, remains about as unknown to literature as literature was unknown to him. There is the gigantic and eternal Mississippi, bordered by Negro shacks and palatial ante-bellum homes and wide fields of cane and cotton, floating on its muddy bosom luxurious pleasure boats and the shanty boats of countless river-rats. There are also the share-croppers, the oil fields, and the settlements of mulattoes and redbones. The more heroic-minded writer has the glamorous Lafitte and the Battle of New Orleans; also Beauregard, and the numerous freebooting expeditions conceived and financed in New Orleans.

Surely here are opportunities for a regional literature making no sectional plea, holding up no way of life as Utopian; but rather reflecting the life of one locality, past and present, and shadowing something of the universal and human through the local and the individual.

But the writer of today who sets out to embody in fiction the Louisiana terrain and its peoples does not have altogether virgin material. He has been preceded by a few writers of considerable

Next Week

FREE LAND
By ROSE WILDER LANE
Reviewed by Howard Mumford Jones

FOUR FRENCH NOVELISTS
By GEORGES LEMAITRE
Reviewed by Ernest Boyd

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stature, among them Lafcadio Hearn, George Washington Cable, Grace King, and Kate Chopin. These figures, and others with less familiar names, have paraded the Creole and the Cajun as characters through both short stories and novels. For the Creoles, with their varying admixture of French and Spanish blood, and the Cajuns, as the semi-literate descendants of the Acadians are called—these two are the most distinctive and the most provocative people confronting the Louisiana author.

GEORGE W. CABLE

When Hearn came to New Orleans in 1877, he saw in the Crescent City the nearest approach to Europe that he had encountered in America. His avowed "worship of the Odd, the Queer, the Strange, the Exotic, the Monstrous" led him to study most the habitués of the cafés and the saloons in the Vieux Carré. He made friends with landladies, with street pedlars, with the flotsam that drifted continually along the narrow *banquettes*. In the city and in the people he had found kindred spirits, which he had sought in vain in New York and Cincinnati, even in London; and soon he wrote, "It is better to live here in sackcloth and ashes, than to own the whole State of Ohio." During his ten years in New Orleans, Hearn lent a curious and appreciative ear to the homely maxims of his acquaintances, and to their patois; and he looked with sympathy upon the easy-going nature of the Creoles. None of the natural beauties were lost on Hearn; the flowers and marshes and sky and Gulf waters possessed for him a richness and luxuriance that made a gem of his slim little book "Chita."

GRACE KING

Cable saw the Creole through different eyes. Instead of the cosmopolitan and tolerant eyes of Hearn, he looked through the eyes of a provincial, if not of a bigot. Cable, who disapproved of dancing and refused to report Sunday theatrical performances for the newspaper, could not possibly feel much sympathy for the Creole civilization. A tireless worker, he tracked documentary sources in many of his narratives, giving perhaps the truth about the Creoles, but not the whole truth. He populated the French Quarter, in a large measure, with degenerate exiles and listless cast-offs of the Latin races. He doubtless felt that he was fair to his subjects. Still, deservedly or not, he won, and holds today, the warm resentment of the New Orleans people—in spite of such books as "Old Creole Days," in which he has given perennial life to early New Orleans.

Cable furnished the starting point for Grace King. She read his stories and set out to write, as she avowed, with the fixed purpose of correcting his portrait of the Creoles. A Creole herself, she insisted that their life had a more respectable side, that there was something rich and fine in the old days, as she had learned about them from the women who gathered on the balconies in the cool of the afternoon to chat and to recapture the glory of a civilization fast slipping away. Hence her "Balcony Stories." She did not idealize the past, but she wrote of it with an undertone of understanding which was impossible for Cable, notwithstanding his hours in the archives. Miss King knew the Creole women best, and almost every one of her stories hinges on the minute delineation of a woman character. The works of Kate Chopin, who wrote largely as a pastime, include only two short novels and two thin volumes of stories. But a few of her tales, based on observations made during her stay of some fifteen years in Louisiana, are little masterpieces. Like Grace King, she is best at picturing women, but she shows greater variety in the classes from which her characters are drawn. Ruth McEnery Stuart, prolific in both novels and short stories, also wrote of the Louisianians of mixed blood, and of the Negroes and the hill folk, chiefly of their simple and unruffled existence. No one of her books has much weight, but in twenty volumes or more she manifested some accuracy in dialect and considerable facility in dialogue.

Pinchot

CLELIE HUGGINS

Most of the fiction writers in Louisiana during the last two years have explored further the field outlined by Cable, Hearn, Mrs. Chopin, and Miss King. Of the half a dozen recent novels on the Creoles and the Cajuns the best is Gwen Bristow's "Deep Summer," the story of founding a plantation on the bank of the Mississippi. The narrative lacks nothing in movement or dramatic qualities, and furthermore, Mrs. Bristow has succeeded in creating genuine characters and atmosphere. Her book has an unmistakable tang of the soil—the mosquitoes, the ants, and the cockroaches, and the tense and oppressive nights of "deep summer."

Elma Godchaux's novel, "Stubborn Roots," has a similar theme, but it slights what puts "Deep Summer" across—the surroundings and the struggle to wrest the land from the wilderness. Instead, it is an attempt to build a novel of character, and falls short of making the people live. Clelie Benton Huggins has begun where Mrs. Bristow and Mrs. Godchaux left off. Her "Point Noir" delineates the collapse of a plantation in the early twentieth century and the degeneration of all those whose lives are caught in its net. Here is a powerful novel, perhaps for no other reason than the preponderance of unrelieved gloom. With strong echoes of William Faulkner, the point of view shifts constantly, leaving the reader grasping at some way of understanding the action, or at least of believing the action probable.

E. P. O'Donnell and Thad St. Martin have given us the Cajun settlements. O'Donnell's "Green Margins" is far the better of the two books and is one of the two or three best novels produced in Louisiana recently. To gather his material, the author took up his abode in the little fishing and trapping settlements along the river below New Orleans; he has caught the spirit of the natives, and the tone of their existence. The story is elemental, but only because O'Donnell's people live elemental lives. Dr. St. Martin brought to the writing of "Madame Toussaint's Wedding Day" a thorough familiarity with his *milieu*, gained through years of medical practice among the Cajuns he has put into his book. Yet he has failed to give plausibility to his characters—characters, it should be said, who in real life strike the outsider as anything but plausible. Both of these books, however, succeed in setting the Cajun in his environment, in picturing his profound ignorance of the outside world, his unquestioning acceptance of life as he finds it, without the least evidence of any desire to escape from his surroundings or to better his position—for he is, in a

LYLE SAXON

(*Continued on page* 16)

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On the Medical Front

THE FIGHT FOR LIFE. By Paul De Kruif. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by JOHN F. ENDERS, M.D.

WHEN Paul De Kruif enters the Elysian Fields and makes his way toward the select precincts of the men of letters, one may prophesy that he will be warmly saluted at least by the author of the "New Atlantis" and "Novum Organon." The accolade of Francis Bacon will not be given because he recognizes the arrival of a later innovator of a philosophy or a new technique—although De Kruif in his day has made sound contributions to the science of immunity—but because this former bacteriologist and present scientific publicist is a potent supporter and disseminator of the old Elizabethan's doctrine. For, as everyone knows, it was Bacon who, perhaps more clearly than any of those mighty wits of the Renaissance, saw in the experimental method the lever which would raise mankind from the superstition, the pain, the disease, and the misery which the old teaching had failed to alleviate. And so he will immediately know De Kruif for one of the members of that New Atlantean foundation, the end of which "is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible."

In his latest book, "The Fight for Life," De Kruif—employing his customary zestful, enthusiastic, and, at times, too theatrical manner—labors valiantly, honestly, and on the whole effectively to give more complete form and more solid substance to this three-hundred-year old vision, even now so far from a perfect incarnation.

Essentially he writes propaganda—directed toward arousing the people to demand from those whom he calls "their masters," more money, more facilities, more well trained personnel, by means of which the considerable body of available knowledge of causes and secret motions of disease may be put to work saving even more lives than it has in the past.

His method of propagandizing is simple. Selecting certain individuals who have been directly or indirectly fired by Pasteur's bold statement that it is in man's power to make parasitic maladies disappear from the face of the globe, he shows them in action, fighting, and sometimes fighting successfully, to eliminate pellagra, preventable deaths of infants and mothers, tuberculosis, syphilis, and infant paralysis. His is an intensely personal approach: "In the hot, coppery sunset of one such day, on the way back into Little Rock, Arkansas, De Kleine—tough Dutchman though he was and is—fought to hold back his tears of anger"; and again, "Now head down he holds them [the monkeys], one after another, so that Charles Armstrong, steady, deliberate—superb bench worker that he is!—can drop a dose." He presents in melodramatic fashion the feverish labors of members of Chicago's Maternity Centre to staunch the bleeding of a poverty-stricken Negro woman just delivered of a child. In this we feel De Kruif errs. To most laboratory workers, clinicians, and public health men this sort of thing is unpleasant, because somehow it does not seem to be in the best of taste. No doubt attempts can be made to justify it on the ground that this sensational and frequently shocking presentation arouses the attention, sympathy, and, it is to be hoped, the coöperative activity of the masses of citizenry. We are reluctant to believe, however, that such pandering to what is considered to be the public's desires is necessary. De Kruif's thesis, we maintain, could be defended quite as effectively without this showy and unrestrained emotionalism, which after all sorts ill with the great objectives which he champions.

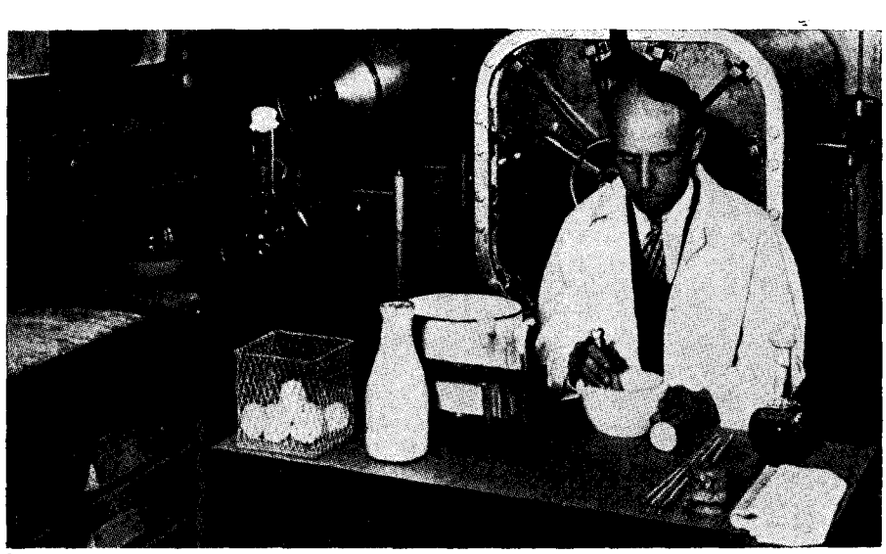
His plea for intensification of effort over a wider front, in the battle against what seem at least to be eradicable diseases, is based not only on humanitarian grounds and the "right to live," but upon possibly the most effective of all arguments—the appeal to the pocketbook. "It costs money to die" is his slogan, and this money, as he points out, is extracted from the tax-payer. Reduce the incidence of advanced tuberculosis, syphilis of the central nervous system, birth injuries, and you will save in the end almost unbelievable sums of money. Tellingly he points to the billions of dollars spent for armaments in this country which may be needed to protect our lives once in fifty years, while we grudge the profitable investment of what would be relatively moderate sums in research and public health.

For the greater part, De Kruif has selected his topics with wisdom and timeliness. The new campaign against syphilis, delayed for too long, is just beginning, and needs every bit of support that it can get from layman and doctor. The battle against tuberculosis is older, but contrary to the opinion of many, it is, as he points out, far from finished. Not moribund is this old enemy of mankind, and it must be relentlessly pursued. No one can deny that with our present knowledge the maternal death rate in this country is scandalously high, and that an indignant public through peremptory demands could aid materially in its reduction. But one wonders whether it is wise to publicize so widely the still highly experimental procedures of employing various chemicals as prophylactic agents against poliomyelitis and the combined use of artificial fever and drugs in early syphilis. To awaken hope when the remedy is uncertain and may prove worthless, as has happened of late far too frequently, must only damage the cause for which De Kruif so ardently contends.

We can then recommend the book as essentially correct in its science, and admirable in intent. Moreover, except for the blemishes to which we have alluded, it is entertaining and lively reading.

But when we have finished this book and others akin to it, the old tormenting question recurs for which this age as yet finds no answer, and which failed to disturb the praiseworthy crusaders of the Chicago Maternity Centre and apparently so many others: When the fight is won, how are we going to use life to render it significant, harmonious, and filled with a high tranquillity? Here science is silent.

Dr. John F. Enders is on the faculty of the Harvard Medical School.



Institute of Pathology, W.R.U., Cleveland *Brownlow*

GERMS MUST EAT: *different types of culture mediums must be prepared for the growth of different germs. From "Medical Magic," by David Dietz (Dodd, Mead).*

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Coming of Age in a Desperate World

IN PRAISE OF LIFE. By Walter Schoenstedt. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by SAMUEL NOCK

WHAT, people ask, will become of cheerful, artistic Spain when all this is over? What, they also ask, could have made cheerful, musical Germany a nest of thuggery? These are questions which the characters in this novel—Peter Volkers and his companions—could answer easily enough, for they grew up in Germany during the war and the years after the war.

People may object that war in Spain is not what war was twenty years ago in Germany. Then there was no bombing of women and children, no massacre of the helpless. Perhaps, however, Walter Schoenstedt's boys, who were youngsters in Berlin at the time of the blockade, might feel that there is something to be said for bombing after all, for bombing at least gets it over with quickly.

Pinchot

WALTER SCHOENSTEDT

The children and the women in Berlin, and in almost all Germany, starved, and went mad, and slowly perished; or they lived on into times not much better. They, and their men with them, endured foreign domination, and were betrayed by Germans of unsurpassed selfishness and stupidity. The Republic in which Schoenstedt's boys grew to manhood was obviously doomed: it is clear to a reader of "In Praise of Life" why Hitler could overthrow such a Jericho with only the foghorn blast of his voice.

Peter and his friends had a childhood without milk, without fun and irresponsibility, without parental care and sensible schooling; they grew to young manhood and womanhood without prospect of earning money, without love and gentleness, without hope. Everybody knows, more or less, that Germans did grow up that way, but very few people take the trouble to consider what such a life really is, and what it leads to. Schoenstedt tells of such a life, without rancor, but with terrible veracity. Now every one may know how brutes evolve in the shape of men.

The viciousness of the National Socialists has been a horrifying mystery to people who know and love Germans and Germany; to read "In Praise of Life" is to understand that in Peter Volkers's Germany anything cruel and villainous might thrive. For not only war and starvation contributed to warping a generation: the personalities of many Germans encouraged violence and despair. The schoolmaster, no less brutal because of his absurdity; the aristocrat and the monopolist who oppressed the people; the fantastic minor official—all these and many others made Hitler inevitable. "Up to their necks in misery, their hopes betrayed a thousand times, it's pretty hard to keep a clear head through all that. The party that makes the most radical promises to them wins, even if the promises are completely senseless."

Like an epidemic, National Socialism flourished where conditions were right for it: Schoenstedt gives the warning of example, that cruelty and stupidity breed pestilence.

After the overwhelming narrative of the first two sections, the third section of "In Praise of Life" is anticlimatic. The picture of the Germany of Hitler is a faint and unconvincing one. No doubt Schoenstedt assumes that his readers know what Germany is like today, or assumes that he need not do again what Glaeser has already done so well. Nevertheless, the suggestion that runs through the whole of Schoenstedt's story is as clear as ever at the last: the suggestion that those who remain in Germany will die, or disappear, or become themselves betrayers of friends, tormentors of Jews, and disciples of unenlightenment. Only those who, like the author, escape into a land where there is some love of intelligence and freedom, will survive to bring new life to Germany when the Terror is past.

"In Praise of Life" would be intolerably painful to read save for the fact that so many, like Walter Schoenstedt, have not submitted to Hitler, and will not submit.

Samuel Nock lived for some time in Germany. He was there in 1933, when Hitler came to power.

One Day's Emotions

IN THE FINE SUMMER WEATHER. By Catharine Whitcomb. New York: Random House. 1938. $2.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

AN adroit bit of plot carpentry assembles the people of this novel at a New Hampshire lake resort one summer's day. There are three married couples, two of them unhappy; a bogus Baroness from Paris; and two delightfully natural children. One of the men in the party happens to have fathered the Baroness's little girl, though his wife is not aware of the fact. This situation should provide an amply resilient springboard for any novelist, and in fact during the twenty-four hours covered by the story a good deal of emotional excitement is duly unleashed. It is all logically worked out; the characters are nearly always true to their natures.

In spite of a setting and manner reminiscent of Charles Brackett's worldly stories, the book can scarcely be classified as light reading. These people display too much scar-tissue, and the author's prose in its better moments reflects too poignantly their emotional dilemmas for the story to be dismissed as sophisticated magazine stuff. Miss Whitcomb often seems on the verge of attempting social satire; she has not yet subdued a tendency to overwrite, and wraps up her plot in too much philosophical cellophane at times, but some scenes are acutely observed, raising high hopes for the future—and Heaven knows we could use an American Huxley or Waugh these days.

To a Ghost

By ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

NOW you may shriek
Who never shrieked
And moan
Who made no moan,

Such is the privilege
Of Death
The boon
Of wandering Bone.

Down corridors
Where once you smiled,
In gardens
Where you sang,

You now may cry,
You now may sob,
And ease
The hidden pang.

Ghosts have no duties
Flesh once knew,
They need
No social sense,

And skeletons
In the dark earth
Have doffed
Their reticence.

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Novellas

THE FLYING YORKSHIREMAN. Five novellas by Eric Knight, Helen Hull, Albert Maltz, Rachel Maddux, I. J. Kapstein. New York: Harper & Bros. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

THIS volume contains five "novellas." A novella, according to Whit Burnett and Martha Foley, in a postscript, "is a story whose development requires more length and leisure than the short story, and yet it is in the nature of the short story in its unity of effect." Well, here we have quite a handful of novellas (will that word ever sound quite right?), and we ought to be able to reach some conclusions from the examination of them.

The first conclusion resolves itself into an expression of gratitude to *Story* magazine, in which these pieces appeared, and which is willing—and, what is more, able—to conduct uncommercial experiments. But will experiments, in this particular instance, lead to anything? Will an intense application to form eventually produce, from some writer or other, another "A Lost Lady"? In any case, without wishing to be unkind to any of the five authors represented here, one has to say that this collection does nothing to make one feel that what American literature needs is more novellas. Oddly enough, the least considerable of the stories—Miss Maddux's "Turnip's Blood"—seems best adapted to this long short story form. "Turnip's Blood" is pure fantasy (pure in the sense that there is no particular moral in it); and fantasy is often lame in a short story and often tedious when spun out to novel length. I shall not attempt a description of "Turnip's Blood," except to say that its chief and real charm lies in the freshness of its author's imagination; an imagination which is delicate and immature, and which will certainly be irritating if it does not grow up.

Mr. Knight, it is true, has also written a fantasy, and he is much further along the road to good writing than Miss Maddux is. So "The Flying Yorkshireman"—the story of Sam Small, who discovered he could fly while on a visit to California, and almost came to dreadful grief while flitting around the skyscrapers of New York—ought to be very satisfactory. And so it would have been, if Mr. Knight hadn't weighted his fantasy down with a moral which we already know too well.

Miss Helen Hull's "Snow in Summer," though not the most fortunate of her writings, shows to what uses the novella can be put, without recourse to fantasy. To achieve your effect by piling detail on detail, with the happy feeling that no mechanical considerations are cramping you in, and with a continuous sense of form—that *would* be something! Miss Hull is stronger here in her detail than in her form; but it is not the kind of detail which makes reading an experience. Still, "Snow in Summer," the story of a middle-class wife who won a literary prize and suffered in New York, does require just the length that it has been given.

Mr. I. J. Kapstein—"The Song the Summer Evening Sings"—could have reduced his piece to a few pages or taken the plunge and elaborated it into a novel. As it stands, or rather falls, it is between those two stools. It is a picture of childhood, written—often very well written—in a reflective mood. Does a mood make a novella? The only unity in this piece is its wistfulness, a wistfulness distracted by the author's attempt towards the end to introduce a note of alarm and horror.

It does seem as though Mr. Maltz in "Season of Celebration" has done the best work in this collection. His style is neither ingratiating nor subtle, but he hits hard. Mr. Maltz's story is a description of New Year's Eve in a Bowery flop house. I don't think that he has got everything into it that he could have put there, and so it is impossible, after reading "Season of Celebration," to take one's hat off and cheer for the novella. But it is true that one of the most valuable elements in contemporary American prose is its power to hurt, as it were, physically. Mr. Maltz has that power. It also looks as though he had quite a future ahead of him.

Comedy in Black Face

TOMMY LEE FEATHERS. By Ed Bell. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

IN lively and racy fashion and with a real gift for veracious dialogue, Mr. Bell has written the story of such Negroes as parade through such petty Southern courts as that over which his old Squire Cain Long Barks presides. I suspect that Mr. Bell was once a police reporter in a small town like his Marrowbone, and that he has a remembering eye and ear. In "Tommy Lee Feathers" that memory shapes into an entertaining but undramatic record of Tommy Lee Feathers, the prodigious fullback of the Marrowbone Black Angels. Tommy's brief career is pulled two ways by the world and religion, the first exemplified by Lura, who made bees drone in his blood, the second by his mother, Sister Feathers, the Sanctified preacher.

That almost Scriptural contest is here a Rabelaisian comedy in black face. And not even the noisy dignity of Sis Feathers seems real in a world in which church is as droll as dance hall and dance hall as church. Also, although they are undoubtedly items of a veracious language, the words often referred to as Anglo-Saxon are almost as ubiquitous as the characters of African descent. The sum is no great book; it does not add substantially to the increasing literature of the Negro. But in such minor characters as that precious thieving pair, old Granny Jo and little Holly, who was goofered, Mr. Bell comes close to great comedy. Unfortunately these are too seldom seen, and the Harlemized racketeering of undertaker, preacher, doctor, and football coach are too familiar. Mr. Bell's book seemed to me to miss distinction by a failure in emphasis. There seems a lack of sympathy for the sad under the ludicrous. His Negroes are merely comic and his comedy therefore is not as substantial as a little more feeling might have made it.

FROM THE JACKET DESIGN OF "TOMMY LEE FEATHERS."

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

GEORGE STEVENS..... Editor
NOBLE A. CATHCART..... Publisher
AMY LOVEMAN..... Associate Editor
HENRY SEIDEL CANBY, WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT, CHRISTOPHER MORLEY } Contributing Editors

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And Sudden Death

IT used to be a maxim of book reviewing that a novelist who killed off his important characters by accident or unmotivated violence was writing mere melodrama, possibly good enough for Hollywood or the commercial magazines, but not Literature. A good novelist is not supposed to get himself out of a jam by putting the heroine into an automobile and running her against a tree. E. M. Forster, for instance, was roundly berated for two episodes of sudden death in novels which he wrote over twenty years ago—"The Longest Journey" and "Howard's End." It begins to look, from the numerous instances of murder, suicide, and other sudden and violent departures from our midst of characters in current fiction, as if Forster was twenty years ahead of his time.

It is unnecessary to count all the trees to make sure that they add up to a forest, so the following instances are listed at random, not by research. All of them concern important characters in the novels mentioned.

Steinbeck, "Of Mice and Men": one accidental murder, one "mercy killing."

Hemingway, "To Have and Have Not," five deaths by shooting.

O'Hara, "Hope of Heaven": one accidental death by shooting.

Cain, "Serenade": two violent homicides.

O'Hara, "Butterfield 8": violent death of chief character, whether by murder, accident, or suicide undetermined.

Cain, "The Postman Always Rings Twice": one attempted murder, one successful murder, one death in an automobile accident, one hanging.

Anderson, "Thieves Like Us": four deaths by shooting.

O'Hara, "Appointment in Samarra": one suicide by gas engine exhaust.

Not to mention William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, or the gangster cycle which W. R. Burnett started ten years ago.

The foregoing list only very loosely represents any concerted "movement" in fiction. Some of the books are of a considerably higher quality than others; Steinbeck and Hemingway, for instance, are more important novelists than Cain and Anderson, with O'Hara somewhere in the middle. (There are good reviewers, however, who take James M. Cain very seriously.) Furthermore, "To Have and Have Not" is Hemingway's least effective novel, while "Of Mice and Men" is probably Steinbeck's best to date. Nevertheless, we have here, roughly assembled and with some variations, a nucleus of what is known as the hard-boiled school; they are in the opinion of many reviewers among the most readable novelists in America; and the looseness with which the list is made up emphasizes the unity of effect which these novels have produced.

Intentionally or otherwise, they are all saying the same thing—that life *is* melodramatic. Some of the sudden and violent deaths enumerated above were carefully motivated, but more were not. Lennie, in "Of Mice and Men," killed Curley's wife by accident; accident was the point (as it was, also, in the two Forster novels). The shootings in "To Have and Have Not," "Thieves Like Us," and "Hope of Heaven," and the two murders in "Serenade," were all unpremeditated. No detective-story writer could get away with anything like that, but detective-story writers are not writing about life, and therefore have no excuse to break the conventions of fiction.

Hemingway was the first of these novelists to say that life is dangerous; it is the undertone of all his novels, like a moral lesson: "live dangerously or you may as well be dead." In the later novelists, particularly Steinbeck, the undertone changes slightly: "live dangerously, because you can't help yourself." Hemingway, of course, has always taken sides; that is, at least, the strong implication of the contempt he shows for those characters in his novels—from Latin Quarter drunks to overfed yachtsmen off Key West—who live in security. In most of the current novels, however, we are merely told that life *is* insecure, and you can take it or leave it. Something may hit you over the head any minute.

Where does this leave the reader? Well, readers of books do not live in a vacuum; they also read newspapers. Melodrama is the news, it is in the air; and enough readers have had the edge taken off their sense of security to explain why there is an audience for the melodramatic novel. Back in 1929, when we were reading "All Quiet on the Western Front" and "A Farewell to Arms," we felt less personally concerned; the war was over. The death of Catherine Barkley in childbirth ("A Farewell to Arms") was, in its way, tragedy; more affecting, esthetically, than the shooting of Harry Morgan in "To Have and Have Not"; but the shooting of Harry Morgan somehow makes us nervous. The difference between those two episodes clearly indicates the road which Hemingway has traveled in ten years; it does not, perhaps, represent an artistic advance; but his readers have unquestionably gone at least a piece of the road with him, whether they wanted to or not.

Perhaps these matters are only indirectly related to literary values. But the point is that melodramatic fiction does, however crudely at times, as far as technique is concerned, get across the idea that life is melodramatic. If you think the will of the individual is puny and ineffectual, you will inevitably write novels about characters to whom things happen, not about characters who make things happen. In the novels of the hard-boiled school, circumstances over which they have no control, or even influence, are making guinea-pigs of the individual characters. So "characterization" in the conventional sense—like motivation—cannot be expected of the melodramatic novelist. That is why we have so many novels told almost entirely in dialogue, without comment from the author; and so many other novels narrated in the first person, also without comment; either way, nothing but action and dialogue, never any analysis or introspection, never even any characters making important decisions. That explains also why the hard-boiled writers are so readable; nothing is more readable than action and dialogue, running fast and without interruption.

All this may well have its artistic limitations. It may represent a point of view that sees too little of life. But it is directly, inexorably related to that part of life which it does see. And every day it becomes just a little bit harder, for the novelist or the reader, to see beyond the melodrama.

Chester Bailey Fernald

CHESTER BAILEY FERNALD, who died recently at sixty-nine, was a born Bostonian who lived and worked as a journalist in California, became a traveler and explorer, and later took up permanent residence in England. Although he was perhaps better known as a writer of many amusing comedies for the theatre, we should like here to memorialize Fernald's earliest book of short stories which appeared in the Nineties, that period so full of faddism and foolishness which yet saw the birth and growth of a few remarkable talents. No one who has read those delectable stories of San Francisco's Chinatown, "The Cat and the Cherub," can doubt that Chester Fernald's was such a talent. The Chinese infant known as the Cherub is an immortal character. The book is excessively rare today. Why has it never been reprinted? To our way of thinking few minor writers have left behind them a volume of such peculiar merit.

W. R. B.

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Letters to the Editor: *Economics and Young Writers; Another Naval Encounter*

The Professional Writer To Be

SIR:—There can be little doubt that in his recent book, "The Summing Up," Mr. Maugham has discussed many vital factors in the art of writing. The novice in the art will heartily agree that "the technique of writing is no less difficult than that of the other arts," since he has ample proof in every word he writes. However, to the beginner, the statement that success is "the greatest danger that besets the professional author" is absurd, and no amount of reasoning advanced by those who actually know that to be true can make him think otherwise. For, all his hopes and plans, artistic, spiritual and monetary, center about the one thought—success. Thus, it is difficult for him to consider it a hindrance instead of a necessary means to his end.

In spite of the fact that a good deal of the novice's time is spent in rewriting what he has already written, he does plan new work abundantly. Proposed novels are rampant in the beginner's class. But the question of finances invariably enters into the planning. What is the budding author to live on while he writes his book? And, since he knows he is not writing an "Anthony Adverse" or a "Gone with the Wind," what is he to live on after the book is completed?

This economic problem, viewed from the unsuccessful side of the fence, calls for another interpretation of art for art's sake. Mr. Maugham says the true artist must be immune to criticism, and must write only to liberate his soul. The beginner does not follow these instructions literally. He writes with one eye cocked on a possible market so that he may get money to continue writing—a form of art for art's sake once removed.

To seek a livelihood elsewhere and to devote to writing whatever time is left over is, according to Mr. Maugham, to become an amateur. It is not that the custom of starving in an attic is out of date at present, but simply that the beginner is afraid he does not possess the seeds of talent necessary to make such a life bearable. He is haunted by the figure of the girl painter in "Of Human Bondage" whose wretched life she herself terminated.

That is how the novice views the art of writing. If his will to create overcomes his fear, he'll be a professional writer; if not, he'll remain a common man.

R. D. SANNIT.

Denver, Colo.

"The Navy"

SIR:—C. P. Stacey, in his review of my book, "The Navy," makes, at least by inference, a charge of blanket inaccuracy and carelessness, supporting it by several instances.

Specifically he is correct in stating that I misdated the Oregon treaty. He is wrong when he says "the book is based chiefly upon the standard authors," among whom, by the way, he rather surprisingly includes Chapelle who, if he is a standard author, has been one for a remarkably short time, since his book was published less than three years ago.

There is no standard author I know of for the period 1815-1860, nor for the Civil War, nor for the period down to the beginning of the Spanish War; no author at all for the period between the Spanish War and the World War. Admiral Sims's work, which is in effect a report, is the only standard for the World War. The book itself, in long quotations from officers' letters, contains its own proof that I did not rely "chiefly" on Allen or any other standard for the French or Barbary wars, but went to the original documents.

I submit that he is also wrong when he says the book "gives very few references." All quotations are supported by reference to the source. The bibliography mentions 317 books, beside documents and newspapers. In typescript it covered nearly a hundred pages, and in the printed volume occupies 19, in small type. There are, as the book stands, 84 pages of appendictical matter to 411 of text, and it was at the earnest solicitation of the publishers that the page references to sources, the absence of which Professor Stacey so much bewails, were omitted.

The statement that "Patterson's attack on the pirate nest at Barataria is placed after the battle of New Orleans instead of before it" is due to a misreading of the text. I did not mention Patterson's attack on Barataria before the battle. But after that famous occasion Lafitte returned and set up shop again. Patterson called on him and chased him away without a fight (Captains' letters, Navy Dept.); and the text of my book does not mention any attack, nor anything but this visit.

On the remaining points, he apparently disagrees with my opinion, stated in the book, and still held, that the war with Spain was basically the Spaniards' own fault. He may hold a contrary opinion, but why use it to bolster up an accusation of error?

I think Mr. Stacey has accurately stated the true basis of his strictures in the first paragraph of his review. "One would welcome an analytical history of American naval policy . . . He is more interested in cutlasses and carronades than in administration, appropriations, and the bases of policy." In fine Mr. Stacey would prefer to read a book about some other subject.

FLETCHER PRATT

New York City

"YOU BETTER FINISH THAT BOOK, MY DEAR. I JUST GOT A MARGIN CALL FROM THE LENDING LIBRARY."

Mr. Stacey Replies

SIR:—It is perhaps best that I should take up Mr. Pratt's strictures on my review of his book one by one.

With reference to the book's sources, I am quite prepared to give Mr. Pratt credit for his considerable citations from printed documents, but I still cannot escape the conclusion that he is "chiefly" indebted to the standard authors. Apparently, however, we differ on the definition of a "standard" author. I cannot understand his refusal of that term to Mr. Chapelle. It had always been my impression that this label was accorded an author or a book on a basis of relative excellence rather than of age, and I am disposed to the opinion that the "History of American Sailing Ships" became a "standard" work at the moment of publication, simply through being recognized as superior to any other in its field.

I am sorry that I cannot withdraw the statement that the book "gives very few references." Several pages frequently pass without a single specific reference being given, and whole topics and important episodes are dealt with on the basis of a single general note. Mr. Pratt's

(*Continued on page* 21)

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What to Do in an Air Raid

BY ELBRIDGE A. MINARD

WE may assume that the unfortunate inhabitants of Barcelona have not had the Spanish equivalent of the official British Government publications listed below,* and we may further assume that it probably wouldn't have helped them much if they had. The British believe in forehandedness; after all, they had a taste of murder from the skies twenty years ago, they read the papers, and they have eyes in their heads, and brains, too. They are trying, soberly and seriously, to prepare their people for what they have every reason to fear will happen if war comes. The implications packed between the yellow covers of these Home Office publications are more believable than the flights of imagination by the horror writers for the Sunday magazine sections.

The titles give a general idea of the ground covered; there is some repetition, chiefly on gas, which after all is pretty nearly the only thing a civilian, by his own efforts, can protect himself against. The "Christian" General Franco has not used it to any great extent, but perhaps his allies and providers wanted to save it. The British regard it as a real threat. They are attempting to provide a mask for everyone and the distribution and maintenance of the equipment is a staggering task. "Personal Protection against Gas" gives you all the help that the Government can by way of the printed word. Lengthy prose, pictures, and diagrams show you how to get yours on. A few whiffs of the gases most apt to be used won't affect you much, but you mustn't delay very long. If you engage in rescue work, and expect to come through without injury, you should use the "Special Service Mask" rather than the "Civilian Duty Respirator." A complete oilskin outfit is advisable, with gum boots; and here again, if you are to engage in rescue work, an airtight suit on the style of a diver's suit, of special material, is recommended. It is exhausting to work in for any length of time, and you should bear that in mind. Further refinements are special facilities for handling the injured through airlocks into decontamination rooms, thence into first aid rooms and dressing rooms.

Common sense and good luck seem to be about all that can help you if you happen to be in a factory or mercantile establishment during a raid (see "Air Raid Precautions in Factories and Business Premises"). The Government doesn't think it will be able to give you more than seven to ten minutes' warning at the most, and that will come through the general community alarm system. That amount of time won't let you get very far. Get down out of the upper floors, don't get yourself under heavy machinery or stocks of heavy goods, and make sure there is more than one exit to the room you're in. Keep your gas mask at the alert, if you have one with you or can get one on the premises. Hope that the owner, if the windows aren't wire-glassed, has pasted cellophane, preferably

SERVICE RESPIRATOR ADJUSTED
From Handbook No. 1

several layers of it, on the *inside* of the panes so that if they are blown in the glass won't scatter. If he is a very foresighted owner, if space permits and the place is an exhilarating target for a bombing squadron, you will retire to a trench system which the Home Office considers much the best refuge. Of course it's no protection against a direct hit, but what place is? Don't crowd, you are warned; fifty at the most in any one place is inviting a shambles (the government doesn't become as graphic as this), and of course a direct hit is very, very unfortunate. If that happens, or if you are nearby, turn to "Rescue Parties and Clearance of Debris" or "Organisation of Air Raid Casualties Services."

For this work you will be equipped with the usual first aid packets with special provisions for burns and gas. For clearing wreckage you will have an assortment of jacks, crow bars, saws, and other heavy tools and tackle. If there are holes blown in the streets, the Special Service Squads will endeavor to clear a way around them so that the Fire Brigade can get to one or two of the fires. Remember, incendiary bombs may be mixed in with gas and high explosive. Don't play a hose on an incendiary bomb; if you must go near it, wear asbestos clothing and dark glasses and throw sand on it; but better still, let it burn itself out and keep the fire from spreading if you can. Special signals will warn you if the water mains have been broken, and don't count too heavily on the fire alarm system still working.

The Air Raid Precaution handbooks are calm and matter of fact; they are not alarmist in the least. Compared with some of the literature put out by the United States Government—some of the explanations of the Social Security Act for example—the style seems wordy and involved, with a vocabulary a little above the man in the street. But there is no mistaking what they may mean to the civilian. The British do not believe in using a pretty girl to show you how to put on your gas mask. He is a middle-aged constable, or a very plain, almost a homely, soldier.

Yes, the next war is going to be brought right home or to your place of business in something other than casualty lists from the Front, hard and bitter as those are. Air Raid Precautions rather than speeches in Westminster may explain some of the willingness of the Labour Party and indeed the English people generally to agree to the enormous expenditures for the Fleet and Air Force. They are working, most of them, three months of the year to pay for some of the last war and for some of the next.

* *AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS. Handbook No. 1: Personal Protection Against Gas, 6d. Handbook No. 4: Decontamination of Materials, 6d. Handbook No. 6: Air Raid Precautions in Factories and Business Premises, 6d. Handbook No. 7: Anti-Gas Precautions for Merchant Shipping, 3d. Memorandum No. 1: Organisation of Air Raid Casualties Services, 6d. Memorandum No. 2: Rescue Parties and Clearance of Debris, 2d. All issued by the Air Raid Precautions Department, Home Office, and printed and published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, London W. C. 2, Adastral House, Kingsway.*

Forgotten Empire

JOURNEY TO MANAOS. By Earl Parker Hanson. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by LOUIS J. HALLE, JR.

THIS reviewer has before him an old news bulletin of the Carnegie Institution, entitled "Expedition for Study of the Earth's Magnetic Behavior," which gives a summary account of a one-man scientific expedition through some twenty thousand miles of the wildest country in South America. In its sober fashion, it tells a tale of adventure and vouches for the high purpose that underlay it. Earl Hanson spent an arduous year and a half packing a load of delicate instruments through the wilderness in pursuit of scientific truth. But in "Journey to Manaos," his own account of a portion of these travels, he writes less as a scientist than as a man of the world. "I went to Amazonia," he writes, "to study terrestrial magnetism and returned to find myself involved in geographical analyses and potential colonization. To me . . . those things seem more important than the variations of the compass."

The portion of Hanson's quest which

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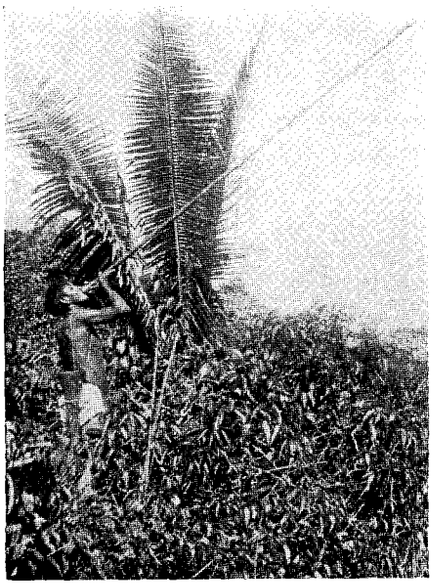

BLOWGUN HUNTER OF MAROA
From "Journey to Manaos."

he recounts in "Journey to Manaos" took him up the Rio Orinoco and down the Rio Negro to its conflux with the Amazon. What he found was a temporarily abandoned empire returning to its primitive state, the forgotten battlefield of an imperialism defeated by its own social and economic vagaries. Old cannon scattered in the jungle still tell of the struggle between Spanish and Portuguese for possession of its wealth, and of the long quest for Eldorado. Rotting beams and a broken mirror were all that remained of what had been a thriving town fifteen years earlier. This region, which has, in a sense, always been Eldorado, has always had the curse of gold upon it. Tempted by the abundant natural wealth of the forest, men have never thought of laboring to produce it. They grew rich on the wild "Peruvian bark" that supplied the world with quinine, until the Dutch began its cultivation in Java. They grew rich on the rubber which they bled from wild trees, until the British and Dutch laid out rubber plantations in the East Indies. Now they seek for still new vegetable gold from which to enrich themselves without the labor of production—until industry and enterprise shall again catch up with them.

Hanson is one of those rare travelers who really seem to gain an enlarged perspective from their travels. He sees the history of Amazonia as an integral part of the history of Western civilization, and the lessons he draws from it are of universal application. His story of the tyrant Funes fits the pattern of tyranny the world over. The many characters whom he met and describes are the victims of world-wide forces. Besides the entertainment of a good travel-narrative, this book offers genuine information and enlightenment.

Mr. Halle is the author of "Transcaribbean" and "Birds against Men."

Cases Alter Circumstances

THE LAW AND MR. SMITH. By Max Radin. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by MORRIS L. ERNST

MAX RADIN, professor of law at the University of California, author of many books on legal subjects, is my favorite popular writer on the subject of jurisprudence. In a world gone mad with one-man-law, that is, dictatorships, our continuation of the democratic process increasingly depends on the effective working of our court structure. Far too long have lawyers endeavored to exclude laymen from the discussion of law problems. We have behaved like parish priests, always eager to mystify our clients. Law should be administered by a group equipped with the technique of the processes, but the objectives must be fashioned for laymen. Many of the complexities of legal procedure have no doubt derived from the desire of the bar to mystify all laymen.

It is high time that a book of this nature was written for the benefit of the general public. I should imagine that every author of a play, a novel, or a non-fiction volume could benefit by reading the book. Max Radin starts with a discussion of the nature of law, writing in a light, entertaining style about the original rituals, the early identification of law-givers with the founders of religion, the ancient law of The Twelve Tablets, and the progressive administrations of the legal process. Law itself is a forecast. In an era such as this, increasing pressures and fast changing mores constantly demand certainty on the one hand and flexibility on the other. Of necessity, as the author points out, justice is the valuation of human conduct in accordance with a particular current standard. Ineluctably the valuation must be made by human beings and must concern itself with the balancing of human desires, rights, and privileges. No one is entirely free and in every case one of the parties must be deprived of complete freedom for the advantage of the other party. Furthermore, during times of war or threat of war, the effect of human behavior is realistically different from what it is when society is running on an even keel.

Not only does Mr. Radin explain in simple terms the derivatives of the common law, the relation between civil and criminal law, the gradual evolution of statutory law, but he gives a proper place to the importance of procedure. Being a realist, he makes clear why justice differs from law and why, in the final analysis, justice cannot be reduced to scientific tests by judicial slide-rules. His discussion of the law in relation to contracts, real estate, negligence cases, and slander actions will be illuminating to every reader.

Society such as we know it today and such as history shows it for thousands of years, cannot exist without some form of law. Each human being wants to be superior to some other human being in his possessions, or in other more subtle ways. This makes inevitable a law-giving process imposed upon or adopted by the community. Under dictatorship of the left and right it is imposed from on top. This spells mass trials, purges, concentration camps. A people's law process is one of the guarantees of democracy.

If each decision reached by a court was arrived at without reference to anything but the facts in the particular case, as Mr. Radin wisely points out, no one would know how to behave in the future and no one would feel certain of not being hailed into court. On the other hand, for the courts to listen to arguments of contending parties and merely pick up a musty law book of a century ago and apply a century-old decision, spells a frustration of communal development and impresses on us of today the mores of a forgotten era. But the author never forgets that the old decisions are of value to the law-giver if for no other reason than that they contain, at times, wise reasoning and clearly show the trends of human desires. The fact that the United States Supreme Court has reversed itself in several scores of cases, sometimes within a span of a very few years, is not a recognition of the ineptness of our bench, but merely evidence of the judicial ability to adjust to changing times.

Some years ago I wrote a magazine piece called "I Don't Like Fish." The point was that at every dinner party, the fair ladies on my right and left would be fairly considerate until the fish course, at which time they would ask questions on income tax, the right to move out of an apartment because the electric icebox was not working, the rules of residence for a Reno divorce, or some other legal question of immediate concern to them. Of course the type of question changed with the seasons. Rent problems are important in October, and separation agreements are thought of when the sap runs in human bodies in the spring of the year. Income tax law emerges in March. And so the calendar runs.

If you want answers in general terms to the philosophy back of law problems and the approach of courts through the ages, read this book. If the author uses a Latin phrase, you can rest assured that he promptly explains it, so that even the readers of this magazine can understand it.

Morris Ernst is the author of "The Ultimate Power" and other books on law for laymen.

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Teaching as an Art

PREFACE TO TEACHING. By Henry W. Simon. With a Foreword by Abraham Flexner. New York: Oxford University Press. 1938. $1.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES ALLEN SMART

TEACHING is like writing in that most amateurs and mere observers consider themselves competent critics and potential superiors of the professionals. In addition, the volumes of discourse on teaching have a very high content of sentimentality, and of ill-founded and irrelevant theory. The percentage of sheer twaddle is so high—approaching that of political discourse—that one must begin a book like this with little hope. In this case, the ensuing surprise, relief, and delight are great. In eighty-eight small pages, Mr. Simon has said more to the point, and packed more good sense, than you can find in almost any eighty-eight other volumes, articles, and addresses on the subject.

The book is divided into two parts, "What the Job Is," and "How to Do It," with a salty "Interlude on Parents." In the first part, Mr. Simon shows that a school is an instrument of society, and so cannot be radically reformed alone, or reasonably used as a tool of minority parties or theories. But he also puts his finger precisely on what can be done to make good citizens of a democracy. Mr. Simon then demolishes whole libraries on the fallacious distinction between liberal and practical education. With his eye still on the ball in another confused mêlée, he picks out the "three indispensable requirements" of a good teacher, knowing the subject matter and how to teach, and "having a vital pattern of life that stimulates you and, indirectly, your pupils." He develops the implications and conflicts here, and adds worldly and humane advice on "How Not to Be a Schoolmarm," with facts and figures on "Your Future." In the second part of the book, teaching is considered as an art, to be learned from study, apprenticeship, and experience. Many conflicting theories are precisely evaluated and integrated in few words, and there is a wealth of specific, anecdotal advice such as a young teacher can get only from a rare master of the art who is realistic, warm-hearted, and workmanlike, and who has not forgotten his own youthful blunders.

Mr. Simon is a professor of education, and "Preface to Teaching" is intended for young teachers, but like first-rate shop-talk in any field, it can be listened to with interest and profit by many others. There are plenty of old teachers who have never acquired these fundamentals. There are plenty of parents who haven't the vaguest idea what their children's teachers can and should be doing. And there are plenty of the rest of us, interested in our world and its future, who can consider ourselves lucky to overhear this master workman talking about a job that cannot be on the "social frontier," but that is very close to any excuse you can find for all the fighting, or for life itself.

Flashes of Brilliance

PAVEMENTS AT ANDERBY. By Winifred Holtby. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1938. $2.75.

Reviewed by MABEL S. ULRICH

IT was in the columns of Lady Rhondda's lively *Time and Tide* that I first met Winifred Holtby and learned to watch for her name. The wit and vigorous keenness of her comments challenged attention even in the group of British young women who, in the twenties, made the early years of that sheet a memorable experience. Then came the ironic and brilliant "Mandoa, Mandoa!" the finely conceived and executed "South Riding"—and the tragic end.

It was extraordinary the feeling of personal sympathy her writings evoked. It was not merely that you "knew" her as you know many admired authors, but that she became as a friend whose thoughts you have shared and with whom you exchange foolish little jokes. And when she died as gallantly as she had lived, the loss was so poignant it seemed inconceivable that you had never been in her physical presence.

WINIFRED HOLTBY

It is not easy therefore to judge this collection of short stories with the detachment demanded of a reviewer. I am not sure that Winifred Holtby would have wanted them published this way, for I do not believe that she herself would claim for them permanent distinction. Here and there occur flashes of the brilliance, humor, and ironic observation that made her last two novels such civilized achievements. Her earlier stories are interesting mainly in that they indicate the stages through which an eager young intelligence passed on its way to maturity. For this reason, too, it is well that the last story, "Episode in West Kensington," concludes the volume. In this omitted chapter of "Mandoa, Mandoa!" the Winifred Holtby of the last years emerges and we are left with the conviction that had she been allowed to live, her rare combination of talents might well have carried her to a high place among Great Britain's most distinguished writers.

How a Fish Gets Along

THE LIFE STORY OF THE FISH. By Brian Curtis. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by CLIFFORD H. POPE

THE information in this book is the kind that one often searches for but seldom finds. This means that the author has done endless searching for his readers. He has, moreover, put down his findings in clear, simple language that is a pleasure to read. Excellent judgment in choice of subjects is shown, and a delightful sense of humor permeates the book from cover to cover. I venture to say that few readers will leave this book unfinished and many will read it at a sitting. Another feature is its elimination of the usual lag that exists in nearly all popular books on scientific subjects. Science moves so fast that its most recent discoveries usually remain buried in technical articles for years before getting into popular print. The author is in close touch with ichthyological research and this has enabled him to give up-to-the-minute information.

Brian Curtis has undertaken to tell us how a fish manages to get along in its world. Water sounds like a pleasant medium to live in, but living in it is not without drawbacks. For instance, when a shallow water fish looks up he sees a mirror with a round hole in it and only through this hole can he peer out into the air world above him. The reason for this and many other even more startling facts about the fish's vision are explained in the chapter on the senses and the nervous system.

Although the chapter headings have a distinctly anatomical terminology, the book nowhere reads like a descriptive anatomy, for each organ or part described is done so from an evolutionary or functional point of view. Body covering, framework, internal workings, and the air-bladder are taken up in due course. There is a chapter on reproduction and growth as well as one on habits and adaptation. Two chapters, one fifth of the book, are devoted to game fish as such although much is said about them elsewhere.

This book should appeal to a great range of age and interests. The intelligent sport or professional fisherman will find answers to many questions that have repeatedly invaded his mind; the layman interested in natural history will enjoy it; the biologist will find it useful as well as instructive, and to the ichthyologist it will be indispensable as a means of saving time and even embarrassment when too many questions about the general biology of fish are asked.

Clifford H. Pope is the author of "Snakes Alive and How They Live."

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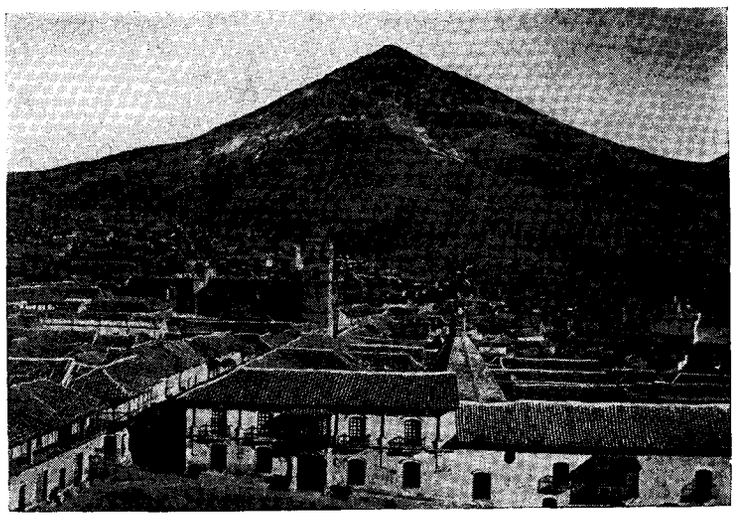
*BOOK PREVIEW**

Meeting in Amricante

BY NORMAN COLLINS



BOLIVIAN TOWN

THE room into which Dunnett stepped was a large one; it was as much a drawing-room as an office. A suite of chairs and a couch stood against the wall. The brilliant sunshine outside had been sifted down by green Venetian blinds and the room itself was no more than dimly lit. At a desk at the far end, a man in a white alpaca coat was sitting, his back halfway towards the door. For a moment Dunnett doubted what he saw; the back that was towards him must have been nearly three feet across. The first effect was of a clumsily rolled-up mattress diligently poring over a pile of papers. Doubt was, however, dispelled by movement. The man at the desk made two attempts to heave himself to his feet and finally got himself into a standing position. Then, on amazingly small feet like a child's, he crossed the room towards Dunnett, holding out a hand like a boxing glove.

"Mr. Dunnett," he exclaimed. "How very nice of you. I was expecting you last night."

"You were expecting me . . . " Dunnett began, and stopped himself.

"Why naturally," Señor Muras answered. "I would have come to your hotel myself but I thought you would probably be resting. There are moments, are there not, when a stranger, a total stranger, can intrude?"

"Might I ask," Dunnett inquired coldly, "how you knew I was here?"

Señor Muras smiled; it was a smile that ran downwards from his small, heavily pouched eyes to the voluminous folds of his chin. "You asked the way of one of my clerks last night," he explained. "He naturally informed me."

"But how did he know my name?"

"He didn't," Señor Muras replied; "I inquired at the Post Office this morning. They told me that there were several letters waiting for you Poste Restante and that they bore the names of Govern and Fryze on the envelope. So I put two and two together and here we are." He smiled deprecatingly as he spoke.

"Is it usual for a Post Office to give that sort of information?" Dunnett asked. "In England, Post Offices regard the letters they handle as confidential."

"It is the same here," Señor Muras assured him. "They only give information to people they know they can trust. They soon get to know one sort from the other."

As he spoke he pulled up a chair and offered it to Dunnett. Then he sat down again himself. The sitting down was not an immediate process; he eased his body bit by bit, sagging a little at the knees as he did so, and finally collapsed backwards on to the seat. From where he was sitting Dunnett could get a better view of him. He was simply a vast sack of a man. For a moment Dunnett got the impression that the whole man was merely an unstatic, liquid mass held together by a suit of loose clothes. But the face belied the liquidity. In the midst of a framework of folds and creases there was a face that was firm and hard and acquisitive. The eyes were small and deep set, perpetually puckered into the beginnings of a smile; indeed, the whole face was set in an expression of smiling and contemptuous benevolence. The contempt lurked mostly in the mouth. The corners of that were turned down too sharply for there to be any benevolence there. And the teeth, small and rounded, were set back from the lips. Altogether it was an unpleasant, rapacious sort of mouth. At that moment, the mouth was smiling to match the eyes. But there might have been a line drawn across the face in the middle so that the mouth could have been condemning people to be shot while the eyes were still smiling with a kind of mesmeric cordiality.

"So they sent you all this way to see me," Señor Muras remarked musingly. "And had they any special object or was it just a courtesy visit, might I ask?" He spoke as though either object would have been equally welcome.

"They want me to go through the books for the company," Dunnett replied. He endeavored to make his voice sound experienced and authoritative. "And they want me to take a check of the stock sheets."

Señor Muras leant back and inserted his thumbs into the arm holes of his waistcoat. He spread a heavy waft of scent all round him as he did so; apparently he was bathed in perfume. "I believe there was something to that effect in the letter," he remarked casually. "I didn't set much store by it." He paused and began to fan himself idly with Mr. Govern's notepaper. Then he turned to Dunnett again. "I am an older man than you are," he said in a low, serious voice, "and I know exactly how you must feel. I can assure you that I should feel just as embarrassed myself if I had to go suddenly into someone else's office and ask to go all through his private ledgers."

"I don't feel in the least embarrassed," Dunnett replied stiffly. "It's only part of the routine of the company. All exporting houses have to send someone round from time to time."

Señor Muras's smile broadened. "No need to apologize," he said. "I've already told you that I understand. So far as I'm concerned I shan't ever refer to it again."

"Would it be convenient if I began straight away?" Dunnett inquired. "I'd like to get started on the books this morning if possible."

The smile vanished, but Señor Muras did not move. "That is the spirit I admire," he said reflectively. "So strangely typical of youth. And so foreign. All fire and impatience. You come thousands of miles, and all that you think about when you get here is finishing your work so that you can go back again." He passed his hand across his forehead and resumed. "But in a sense I don't like it," he said. "It makes me feel so middle-aged; I seem tired and indifferent to things. But there

**This week* The Saturday Review *presents an episode, slightly condensed, from Norman Collins's novel, "Flames Coming out of the Top," the story of a young Englishman on a business mission to Bolivia. "Flames Coming out of the Top" will be published by Harpers in May.*

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you are: I've got a daughter of nearly twenty. I'm not so young as I was."

Dunnett got to his feet. "If you wouldn't mind showing me where things are," he said, "I'd like to start checking your receipt notes by our invoices."

Señor Muras did not attempt to move: he regarded Dunnett through half closed eyes. "If I had had your energy, your energy and your head for business, I should be a richer man now than I am. Only last month one of my clerks stole a whole month's consignment of goods from under my nose, and I had to make up the loss out of my own pocket."

"Could you please take me through to the counting house?" Dunnett asked a little more pointedly. "There's a lot of work to be done." He began to move towards the door as he spoke; he knew that if he stopped, little by little he would be drawn into the entangling web of Señor Muras's conversation.

Still Señor Muras did not move. "I prosecuted my clerk," he said. "He was only a young boy. A very handsome looking fellow too. But I made myself do it. A thief in our midst is not a pleasant thing; and once a man's integrity has gone there's nothing left to save." He looked at Dunnett again and his eyes smiled invitingly. "You said that you wanted to check the stock?" he asked.

"If you please," Dunnett answered.

"Then in that case I will show you round," Señor Muras replied. "Our stock rooms may not be big, judged by London standards, but they are interesting. And they're certainly big for this part of the coast." He began heaving himself backwards and forwards in his chair and then shook himself suddenly onto his feet. "I'll lead the way," he announced.

He led Dunnett out of the private office into the courtyard where the warehouses themselves stood. He felt in his pocket and brought out a key. "You'll find it pretty full just now," he said. "I'm afraid some of the stuff hasn't been moving very fast. It's the war situation. All legitimate trade has suffered."

When Señor Muras had opened the door Dunnett found himself facing a neat, swept out corridor. Rows of shelves ran down the whole length of the walls and the shelves themselves were full. The warehouse was a model of what all warehouses should be. Señor Muras stood by and apologized for it.

"That's where your stuff goes," he said. "In there, and I'm afraid it stays there. Perhaps some day we'll be able to shift it."

Dunnett crossed over and began examining a crate entitled *Tinned fruits assorted 2 cwt.* It was not yet unpacked, and the whole crate was still roped up. One corner of the case, however, was damaged, as though someone had diligently and maliciously attempted to prise it open. He had just bent down to examine it, when he was aware of a looming bulk of flesh just behind him.

"Do our things usually arrive in that condition?" Dunnett asked.

"Sometimes," Señor Muras answered. "For months we have no trouble and then, for no reason, they damage the boxes in unshipping them. Of course we complain. We make protests. But there is nothing really that can be done about it. It is the native stevedores. They are savages."

Dunnett was about to walk to the far end of the warehouse when Señor Muras stopped him.

"And now, if you will permit me," he said, "we'll go back to the office. I wish to introduce you to the staff."

Señor Muras led the way across the courtyard. For a man of his weight he moved astonishingly fast: he swayed from side to side on his little feet like a seal. Dunnett followed in his shadow. There was certainly no appearance of a trade depression at the Compañia Muras. Altogether a note of activity and business hung in the air. From one of the outer depots there came the steady sound of sawing and hammering as though a labor corps were all building crates and packing them against time; and from a nearby window came the fierce clatter of typewriters. Señor Muras opened the door in the main building and stood inside for Dunnett to precede him: they were back in his private office again.

Whilst they had been away someone had served drinks. On a small table in front of the divan now stood a vacuum jug of iced water, a dish of limes, a couple of siphons. A large bottle of gin stood beside them. Señor Muras's eye brightened at the sight.

"You'll drink a gin-fizz with me," he said. "It's the best thing there is in this climate. In Spain, sherry; in England, whisky-and-soda; in France, champagne; in Germany, lager beer. But, in South America, gin-fizz." He spoke reverently, as though he had just uttered some quintessential philosophy, something which summed up in a few simple words the inner secrets of nations.

"No, really, thank you. Not if I'm going to work afterwards." Dunnett ran his hand across his forehead. Small beads of moisture made a line from temple to temple. The gin-fizz looked cool and tempting, but he resisted it.

Señor Muras, however, ignored him. He bent over the table for a moment, breathing heavily from the exertion of stooping, and then straightened himself slowly and laboriously. He had two glasses in his hand and gave one of them to Dunnett. "No gin to speak of in that," he said reassuringly. "Just a little lime and soda to wet the throat." He passed the glass to Dunnett and allowed himself to collapse gradually onto a chair. He took a slow, appreciative drink and turned once more to Dunnett.

"You're not smoking your cigar," he said. "Is it not to your liking?"

Dunnett twisted the thing in his fingers and looked at it. "It's all right," he said at length. "It's only that I don't happen to feel much like smoking."

"You have a strong head for cigars," Señor Muras remarked. "I smoke only the mildest myself. Perpetually a cigar, but only of the lightest."

"I suppose this is rather a heavy one," Dunnett admitted.

"It is an evening cigar," Señor Muras remarked reprovingly. "To smoke it in the morning is like drinking port before a meal. Will you allow me to introduce you to a very gentle, elegant cigar?"

"Thank you." He was surprised at himself for accepting. What he really wanted was to start work right away. But somehow the gin-fizz seemed to have removed the top layer of urgency from the morning. He saw now that it would be far more sensible to accept Señor Muras's gentle, elegant cigar and hear what he had to say for himself. His best tactics for the moment were to play a waiting game and give Señor Muras a chance to let something unguarded slip out in the ordinary course of conversation.

"Permit me." Señor Muras took Dunnett's cigar and laid it carefully on a tray. Then he forced a new one on him. It was not quite so thick as the old one but considerably longer. On the band was the portrait of some national liberator long since executed by some other national liberator.

Dunnett lit the cigar with diffidence. It seemed scarcely less pungent than its predecessor; there was the whole lurid history of Cuba in every puff. He moistened his throat with the rest of the gin-fizz.

Señor Muras poured him out another drink and suddenly became very serious. "Mr. Dunnett," he said slowly and intently, "I want to ask you a favor."

"What is it?" Dunnett inquired.

Señor Muras cleared his throat. "You have been sent out here to discover any possible discrepancies, is that not so?" he asked.

Dunnett nodded.

"Then may I ask a favor of you, I repeat? Something that may not be easy but would be very gracious of you."

"What is it?"

"If you discover any discrepancies do not report them. That is all I ask, but I ask that with all my heart. I will see that it is worth your while."

Dunnett rose to his feet. "Are you trying to bribe me?" he asked.

Señor Muras coughed. "I was not offering you anything," he replied. "But I shall be happy to reward you if you wish. I only did not wish to offend you."

"If I find any discrepancies I shall report them immediately," Dunnett replied. "That's what I came for, and that's what I'm going to do. And from what I know I'm going to find plenty."

"That is precisely what I fear," Señor Muras replied. "The clerk who was dis-

(*Continued on page* 17)

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We tried an experiment—We sent copies of W. L. White's new novel, *What People Said*, to several hundred readers *before publication*, to test its reception with the reading public. From their reports, written before the critics' reviews appeared, we know certain facts about the book. You, too, can tell from these reports whether you want to read this novel of what happened to average men and women, when they became involved in a national front page scandal.

These are the facts:

1—89% of the readers definitely liked the book and were glad they had read it; many called it the best American novel they had read in years; several predicted a Pulitzer Prize.

2—Men and women liked it equally well, but many of the women *who liked it best themselves* said they thought it was primarily a man's book.

3—Though we have had advance reader reports on other books, we have never before found readers so responsive, or received such detailed and excited reports.

4—People who have lived in small towns were excited about it because it mirrored their own lives; people in big cities liked it because it gave them a vivid picture of another way of American life.

5—We were amazed to find that its language, which is the everyday speech of middle-class men and women, was distasteful to 7% of the readers. If you are not used to seeing colloquial speech in print, you may not like this book.

6—A majority liked it primarily for its picture of life in America, and secondarily for its story of individuals caught in a public scandal. A vigorous minority was more absorbed in the story and less interested in the background.

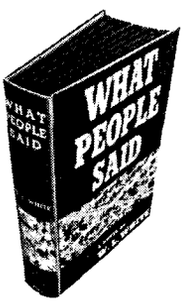
They told us:

"W. L. White is the Grant Wood of American literature, for what Wood has done with paint, White has done with words."—A. G. S., *N. Y.*

"The fastest reading long novel I have read in a long time. My interest never lagged."—J. F. B., *Ohio.*

"The author has a feeling for small things and this feeling has helped him form a most perfect background of simple, overwhelmingly familiar detail. Small town things like coca cola and fried chicken on Sunday and knowing what people drink whiskey and where they get their clothes and what they give to the church."—Mrs. J. M. K., *North Carolina.*

"It tells what people were saying along the main street of any town in boom and depression. The conversation has a vitality which you know is truth. The characters are real. His whole book is good for remembering."—H. R. C., *Washington.*



"There is a feeling of vitality, the rush of life, throughout the course of the story. The aches and pains of a town growing up, in boom times and depression, are here, and all the little things the folks say and do and what they think of their neighbors and what they tell their friends. Where is Oklarada? Athena? Nearly everywhere. Which is why What People Said should have a wide appeal. It is the reader's town."—E. M. W., *Maryland.*

"Fifty times, if at all, one must say: 'Exactly! I've felt that way!' or 'I have seen that person!' The verisimilitude of the characters is amazing; here are no good men ranged against villains, but men like the rest of us who are neither wholly good, nor wholly bad."—E. S., *Ohio.*

"It has movement. It never drags. It is a story that for story value alone, makes worth-while reading. Its author has insight, understanding, humor and sympathy. As a study in the career of a man who was both the product and the victim of his time and his environment, What People Said is an unforgettable novel."—S.H.S., *Kansas.*

"I have lived in Athena, Oklarada, though that is not the name of the town or state. I know the Norssexes, the Carroughs, yes, and even Buck Warn, although those are not the names by which I know them. A remarkably human novel which I thoroughly enjoyed."—Mrs. P. M. H., *Kentucky.*

"A remarkably candid and thorough piece of reporting. The story has reality, not only because it *might* have happened, but because it, or something very like it, *has* happened and *is* happening in hundreds of cities in America. Mr. White makes us think about ourselves and our world. One has an uncanny sense of having experienced the story."—G. H. N., *New York.*

"As truly American as a Ford car or corn on the cob."—A. M. M., *Ohio.*

"This is the first piece of important literature to be written entirely in the American language—not in the vernacular of the underworld or the underprivileged, but in the prevalent American tongue."—L. T., *Arizona.*

"I feel I cannot praise enough this moving novel. It is honest and stirring and pertinent, a picture of life as it is lived and problems as they are faced in every Oklarada, by all the Lee and Isaac Norssexes, by the Juniors and the Bucks and the women who love them and the men who hate them."—R. I. B., *Illinois.*

"As peculiarly American as the hot dog, coca cola, or the Good Humor man, as universal as love, hate, ambition, and desire."—L. E. S., *Ohio.*

"As I close What People Said, I feel as if I have just read *Middletown* in fiction form, and that I already know which novel will win next year's Pulitzer Prize."—Mrs. H. H., *Pennsylvania.*

"Let me put it bluntly once and for all, it was great! I am afraid you have a howling success on your hands."—K. S. R., *New York City.*

"This book is for the nation. It touches each of us somewhere. The most thrilling reading I have done in a long time."—C. L. D., *Illinois.*

"The kind of book that starts people talking—and when they do, they will be talking about themselves."—G. R. H., *Oregon.*

Then the critics:

Alexander Woollcott (*in a broadcast*): "Young Bill White's first novel is absorbing—as true as steel and as American as a stack of wheatcakes." **Oliver LaFarge:** "I place a sizable bet on it, here and now, for wide popular success and a Pulitzer Prize." **Harold Strauss,** *New York Times Book Review:* "It stands squarely in the great American tradition of realism, shoulder to shoulder with Frank Norris, Dreiser and Lewis." **William Soskin,** *Herald Tribune Books:* "Will win a wide, enthusiastic audience . . . ironic implications . . . deadly satire." **Harry Hansen,** *World-Telegram:* "Keen, discerning, truthful . . . It's the Midwest, flesh and bones." **Lewis Gannett,** *Herald Tribune:* "May be the most important 1938 American novel for 1938 Americans to read and to think and talk about."

Now it's national news—and a best seller!

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

A NOVEL BY W. L. WHITE **614 pp. $2.75 VIKING PRESS**

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Four American Poets

THE MAN WITH THE BLUE GUITAR. By Wallace Stevens. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1937. $2.

SELECTED POEMS. By Allen Tate. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1937. $2.

SAID BEFORE SUNSET. By Frederick Mortimer Clapp. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1938. $2.

U. S. 1. By Muriel Rukeyser. New York: Covici, Friede. 1938. $2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THIS group of books displays an assortment of styles. The eclectic, aesthetic, and intricate Wallace Stevens represents those days before the War, of the American renaissance in poetry, when art for art's sake was enough. Allen Tate is of the hyper-intellectual after-the-war period. Frederick Mortimer Clapp is a fine-arts man of nearly sixty who is today writing cogent and vigorous verse. Muriel Rukeyser is one of the youngsters, the most original and promising of the younger women poets. If you date the poetic renaissance from 1913, you might call this a cross-section of a quarter of a century's American verse.

The Blue Guitar is Wallace Stevens's symbol of the imagination in any man. He finds himself caught in an age "of great change and great confusion," and tells us that the purpose of the second group of poems in this volume, "Owl's Clover," is to state "what makes life intelligible and desirable" and "to isolate poetry." The title-poem group deals with "the incessant conjunctioning between things as they are and things imagined." With propaganda assailing us on all sides today, it is a difficult time for such a craftsman of pattern as Stevens. He is subtle, eccentric, and "pure poet." His language is often a delight. But you have only to read his poem about Africa, "The Greenest Continent," to be aware, not only of extremely fine blank verse, but of the spirit of poetry brooding above the suicide of nations—a spirit that may save us yet. Wallace Stevens is not to be dismissed as a mere esthete. He is also, as Horace Gregory has said, "a trained observer" of an age decadent yet germinating the new.

In Allen Tate's "Selected Poems," his "Ode to the Confederate Dead" repays rereadings. His idiom is difficult at first, but such poems as "The Oath" and "The Wolves" have an almost appalling grip upon the super-reality that most men cannot reach. "Mother and Son" is an intensely human piece of work. Tate is the modern combination of poet and critic, as is Eliot. Without Eliot's originality or creative drive, he is at the same time always extremely literate and often interesting, if sometimes sapless and dry.

No less a poet than Robinson Jeffers praised Mr. Clapp's "New Poems." "Said Before Sunset" is also notable. For one thing, Mr. Clapp is often entertaining, and that is an unusual thing to find in a super-serious age. There are over sixty poems here, and, while they differ in merit, they compose a book of vivid variety, a book without any shoddy, a book that so combines old method with new that we feel it to represent the best of modern work.

In "U. S. 1," Muriel Rukeyser has not yet entirely clarified her expression. She is still doing a certain amount of tentative work, but she is indubitably the most interesting of the younger women poets. She represents the purposeful younger generation, and in her "The Book of the Dead" she has handled the Gauley Bridge disaster, where so many workmen died of silicosis, with poetic quality and dramatic impressiveness. "Mediterranean," which ends the book and throws sidelights on the Spanish Civil War, is less successful. We have learned so much since she wrote it, and so many heroic things have happened, that the Barcelona she then left seems to have existed in another world. Miss Rukeyser is incisive. But for a poet so interested in a cause, she maintains a peculiar intellectual aloofness from her audience. She writes for the few who can understand. Perhaps, in most cases, poet and audience can never truly meet—but when they can, a great deal can be accomplished.

Fiction of the Bayou Country

(*Continued from page* 4)

large measure, happy and thankful for what he has.

The place of the Negro in Louisiana fiction is second only to that of the Creole. In fact, it may be said with some truth that the Negro as an individual, speaking a true dialect, was first introduced in Louisiana. To the pathetic figure of Irwin Russell goes the credit. His writings are genuine, though meager in volume; and, as Thomas Nelson Page put it, he "awoke the first echo."

To think of the Negro in the literature of the last decade is to think of "The Green Pastures" and in turn of Roark Bradford's "Ol' Man Adam and His Chillun." With its smooth and rhythmical dialect and its outline of the Negro's religious conceptions,—not as they exist, it is true, but as they appear to the white man,—"Ol' Man Adam" has become classic. "Kingdom Coming" and one or two others make a more serious attempt at realism, but most of Bradford's later writings, especially the stories that he seems to turn out effortlessly and endlessly, have the facility of expression and the easy dialect of the earlier books, but little else. R. Emmet Kennedy has come nearer than Bradford to picturing the Negro as he lives today. The characters in his sketches and stories ring true, but as yet he has not put his people into a story of any consequence. Roger Wiley and Helen McGloin Wood have attempted in "Us Three Women" to give the Negro an existence in fiction, but they have not withstood the temptation to revamp the Negro's character and speech for humorous effect.

In "Children of Strangers," his first novel, Lyle Saxon has invaded a new corner of Louisiana's racial geography—a mulatto community in the west-central part of the state. His subject has tremendous possibilities, but the book leaves too much unrealized. The author knows his material well and succeeds in picturing the mulattoes and their country, as also in showing their relation to the strata above and below.

Hamilton Basso, one of the ablest authors nurtured in Louisiana, has set his "Cinnamon Seed" near New Orleans, and has given forceful reality to the environs and the characters, especially the Negroes. Yet he has concerned himself here less with the Louisiana scene than with the problems of the South as a whole. Both the author and his later novels have moved out of Louisiana, but he continues his challenging, though bewildered, probings into the South's peculiar institutions.

It is with considerable interest, then, that we await new contributions to Louisiana fiction—also with some optimism, for the signs seem to be right. The Louisiana novelists of today may be unduly fascinated by the unique history and civilization they have set out to reproduce; they may be tempted to exaggerate this uniqueness. But these writers have their feet on the ground; in the main, they are looking at life. To the present they have not succumbed to the type of ancestor-worship which has come to be the *bête noire* of Southern fiction elsewhere, nor have they asked the reading public to follow them through reams of sentimental effusions of the honeysuckle-and-mockingbird sort. They have contented themselves with telling good stories that are true to the locale and the folk they have chosen to use. These writers are headed in the right direction, and the bayou country will have to wait for more adequate representation in fiction only until an author of sufficient proportions appears on the scene. This ultimate delineator of the region will have the love and knowledge of nature which Audubon possessed; the sympathy and understanding and tolerance of Hearn, and his eye for the natural scene; the historical information and the scholarly attitude which were Cable's; and an ability at characterization and story-telling which has not yet cropped out among Louisiana authors.

Arlin Turner is on the faculty of the University of Louisiana, in the department of English.

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Meeting in Amricante

(*Continued from page* 14)

missed, remember. I do not know what else he has done. For all I know he may have juggled with balances to suit himself. It will take months to discover."

"It won't take me months," Dunnett said ominously. "Not if the books are in order."

"But how can we be sure even of that?" Señor Muras inquired helplessly. "He was my confidential clerk. I entrusted him with everything and now he is in a prison cell. It is all very dreadful and upsetting. That is why I had hoped you could have told me about the defalcations and spared dear Mr. Govern in London."

"What do you want to know for?"

"In order that I might make good the deficiency out of my own pocket."

"Then if you're so eager to make good why don't you settle the accounts themselves?"

"I want to, but they won't let me."

"Won't let you?"

"No. My pride forbids it. Every time I make myself ready to pay, another letter arrives from England. And such letters. As though I were a thief, a common swindler. Cannot they understand that such methods are no use with Juan Muras? I tell you that I would sooner go to jail than pay a bill in those circumstances."

Dunnett considered this point.

"I should have thought that you might have managed to swallow your pride and pay up," he remarked at length. "It would have been far simpler in the long run."

"To some natures possibly, but not to mine," Señor Muras repeated. "It is there that you do not understand us. An Englishman has many fine points. He can be honest, he can be conscientious, he can be faithful, he can be ambitious; very often he is all those things, and that is why he has become master of half the world. But there is one thing that an Englishman very rarely is—proud. With us, pride is a national quality. It is a Latin characteristic."

"It's not a very businesslike one," Dunnett observed.

"Businesslike." Señor Muras snapped his fingers in the air. "How I detest the word. Only the Englishmen use it. It does not exist in other languages. It is the compliment of shopkeepers. In England to call a man businesslike is to pay him the highest tribute in the dictionary." Señor Muras paused. "Forgive me," he said, reaching out for Dunnett's glass, "I had not noticed that it was empty."

"No more during office hours," Dunnett replied. "Don't forget that I've got some work to do."

Señor Muras turned to him. "Forgive me," he said, "if I seem rude and overbearing, but as I said just now I am an older man and I can speak to you without offence. If you had been of my own age, no doubt we should have quarrelled. As it is, I can talk quite freely. I can even give you advice: above all things, cultivate elasticity of mind; it is essential to the proper enjoyment of life. Because you are not accustomed to drinking in the middle of the morning at home do not conclude that it would necessarily be wrong to take a light drink in Amricante."

"But how can I be expected to keep a clear head for figures if I go on drinking?" Dunnett asked.

"Have you ever tried to handle figures in this temperature?" Señor Muras replied. "Believe me, national habits are not acquired without some good reason. Moreover, you are here as the representative of a great firm. Your first visit is naturally a ceremonial one to me. To drink with me would be to show our mutual respect."

"If you put it in that way," Dunnett replied, "I must accept." As he said it, he tried to persuade himself that it was more subtle not to go on refusing. He did not want Señor Muras to think that he was a man unaccustomed to a little simple drinking.

Señor Muras smiled. "That is better," he answered. "We're civilizing you already."

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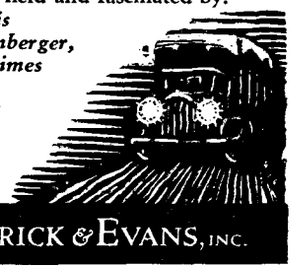

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Civil Liberties

YOU CAN'T DO THAT. By George Seldes. New York: Modern Age Books. 1938. 50 cents.

Reviewed by GUIDO PANTALEONI, JR.

THE purpose of this book, according to Mr. Seldes, "is to tell . . . what is happening to our inherited liberties, and to survey the forces which, in the name of patriotism, are making a desert of the Bill of Rights." That sounds very familiar, and you could hardly be blamed if you prepared yourself for a scathing attack upon the N.R.A., the A.A.A., and F.D.R. himself. But you would be wrong. This time it is an attack upon the vested interests, and the "inherited liberties" belong to labor.

The first five chapters contain a lurid account of physical brutalities and other violations of personal rights suffered by labor and its organizers at the hands of the police, vigilante organizations, and the law courts during the period 1929-1938. Frightful as the recital is, there is comfort, first, in the fact that all of the incidents were reported in one form or another in the daily press at the time they occurred and, second, in the reflection that the number of the cases is not as impressive as would at first appear, if one remembers that the list covers a period of eight years of the worst depression known and applies to a population of one hundred and twenty million souls.

There are some curious omissions, however. There is no mention of sit-down strikes and the rights of non-union men. There is no mention of the little tailor thrown in jail for violating the N.R.A. code. There is no mention of Senator Black grabbing correspondence and telegraph files. Huey Long is referred to only once, and parenthetically. In fact, the omissions are so obvious that one suspects Mr. Seldes of complaining only incidentally about the violation of personal rights. The real objection seems to be that the cause of labor was hurt.

In the next nine chapters Mr. Seldes shows forcefully and with abundant sarcasm that most violations of the rights of labor are committed in the name of patriotism, and that underlying the patriotism is always a vested interest or a profit motive. A special chapter is devoted to exposing the real interests of the Chamber of Commerce, the American Liberty League, the National Civic Federation, the American Legion, the Crusaders, and many other similar business and patriotic organizations. He even includes the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

A whole chapter is devoted to showing that the newspapers are run to make money and are therefore influenced by their advertising clients. Though Mr. Seldes doesn't mention it, they are also influenced, for the same reason, by what people like to read.

The weakest part of the book is the last, which attempts to summarize the various drives exposed in the main portion as a fascist drive. A whole chapter is devoted to analyzing the ridiculous opera bouffe of Mr. MacGuire and his supposed scheme to get General Butler to set up a dictatorship. All newspaper readers will recall the incident, supposed to have involved G. M. P. Murphy and others. The only proof was the gossip of General Smedley Butler, and the press generally laughed the incident to the burial it deserved. It is difficult to believe that Mr. Seldes is sincere in his panic over this incident. If he was sincere, why

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE OBSTINATE MURDERER *Elisabeth Sanxay Holding* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Expert envenomer deals death undeterred until clever youth shows Van Cleef who did killings—and why.	Early forebodings about identity of killer overbalanced by amazing deviltry and horror that animate entire tale.	Macabre
GREEN WOOD BURNS SLOW *Monica Brice* (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard: $2.)	Crippling explosion of safe-blowing charge starts two engaging "peter-men" on trail of exciting events.	Criminals seem just too gentlemanly and articulate to be real but there's gallons of action and much emotion.	Readable
CROOKS IN CLOVER *Peter J. Smith* (Lippincott: $2.50) (Non-fiction)	Ex-Scotland Yard inspector tells how con men and international crooks plan crimes, set stage, and make their kill.	Outside of unfortunate impression that most victims of English and Continental wrong 'uns are "rich Americans," this is good reading.	Engrossing.
THE DEATH OF A CELEBRITY *Hulbert Footner* (Harpers: $2.)	Apparent suicide of successful playwright fools most, but Lee Mappin scents slaying and follows strange clue to killer.	Intrigues, glamour, and back-stage romance of N. Y. theatrical world add zip to cleverly concocted — if somewhat over-written—baffler.	Agreeable

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didn't he at least discuss the equally fantastic changes of Doctor Wirt about a communistic drive instead of dismissing them in a sentence?

In his own words, Mr. Seldes is a "Have-not" and one of the "intellectuals who always side with the dispossessed." He would like to "bring about a coöperative or distributive system which would insure to each all the food, clothing and shelter, and the personal property he could possibly dream of—social security for all, abundance for all." He believes in a separate labor party supported by labor and labor only, owing no allegiance to the vested interests. He wants this new party to champion labor's rights and bring about the adjustment he wants in the rights of property. Fine, more power to him. One can only wish that he had said just that and not dragged in the Bill of Rights.

Sharing a Diary

TWO SOLDIERS—The Campaign Diaries of Thomas J. Key, C. S. A., and Robert J. Campbell, U. S. A. Edited by Wirt Armistead Cate. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

IF Hervey Allen, in "Action at Aquila," had had his Colonel Franklin pick up a Confederate soldier's diary on the battlefield and use it to make his own entries in till the book was filled, I'm afraid most critics would have admonished Mr. Allen severely. And yet that is exactly what happened with these two Civil War diaries, except that the positions were reversed. Twenty-three-year-old Robert J. Campbell enlisted in the famous Third Iowa Infantry, fought through Blue Mills, Shiloh, and the final taking of Vicksburg, was badly wounded at Jackson, Mississippi, and was finally captured in the battle of Atlanta, when the Third Iowa itself was nearly wiped out. The brief entries in his diary run from January 1, '64 to the actual day before his capture, July 21. And then there is the brief notation, "July 22nd—The foregoing memoranda was kept by a Federal, and I will now complete the book by inscribing my historical events—Thos. J. Key."

So we have the war from both sides, and with that day to day veracity that diaries give. Of the two diaries, that of the thirty-four-year-old Confederate Captain, Thomas J. Key, is much the more reflective, detailed, and interesting. He has an eye for a story and puts down the little things that make a scene live. His rhetoric is the rhetoric of his time, often naive, sometimes stilted, but highly representative, too. Both men were obviously good soldiers—both men sincerely patriotic. But the Confederate Captain, if the more bitter, is also the more thoughtful. It is pleasant to learn from Mr. Cate's admirable little prefaces that both men survived their war experiences. You can get the Civil War from any one of a hundred points of view, but here is how two very typical Americans felt about it. It is a distinct, if minor, contribution to Civil War literature.

Secret Knowledge

THE HUMAN SITUATION. By W. Macneile Dixon. New York: Longmans Green & Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT BIERSTEDT

STRANGER to none of the world's literature and philosophy, and to little of its science, W. Macneile Dixon, in these Gifford Lectures for 1935-37, joins company with the distinguished scholars who have made this lecture series among the finest in the republic of letters. For many years a professor of English literature at the University of Glasgow, from which he retired in 1935, he addresses himself here to the problems which disturbed the first member of our species and will doubtless disturb the last—the problems of human life and destiny.

What is man? Why does he swarm over the earth? What is the meaning of his life and the destiny of his soul? Is it all a comedy which rushes eagerly to fulfillment, or a tragedy which plods wearily to decay? The terms of the Gifford lectureship forbid recourse to revealed religion, so the author is on his own, first to exercise the paradoxes of reason and then to tell his answers. After an accounting to reason, then, for its indispensable part, he discovers its strange conspiracy of silence on the issues of sublimity, on faith and love, on sincerity and reverence, and on the good, the true, and the beautiful. The God of love "will not be found in the palace built for him by the metaphysicians," nor indeed in the laboratories built without him by the scientists. By a reasoning soft and suave and almost ineluctable, the author proves, paradoxically enough, that reason cannot discover the existence of God nor the immortality of the soul. Man may be an interlude in the cosmos, but the cosmos is, in turn, an interlude in the mind of man, a part of the secret knowledge which the mind has of its intimate self. Without this secret knowledge, without a mind whose life transcends the bounds of mortal existence, the dignity of human life becomes an indefensible travesty where reason plays an intolerable role and experience a meaningless one, where man is but an etching on the palimpsest of time, to be erased, rubbed out, and written over.

One cannot easily escape the persuasion of an earnest man, nor in good conscience challenge a humble man. No trace of arrogance or complacency sullies these pages; the author states his faith and says he cannot live without it. Those who find it congenial may share it with him for the asking and find quiet joy in his intimations of immortality. Those who do not can still judge the argument delectable, the logic seductive, and the prose superb.

Robert Bierstedt is on the philosophy faculty at Columbia University.

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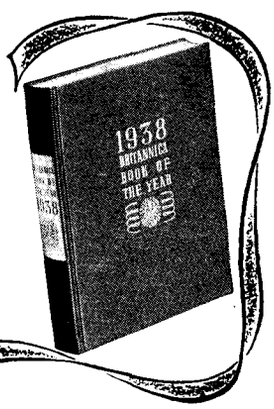

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The New Books

Biography

LUCID INTERVAL. By Frank Irving Fletcher. Harpers. 1938. $3.

This is a book whose excellences (which are many) do not submit well to definition, description, or classification. In form an autobiography, it is the life of a man to whom nothing in particular has happened since he read Laurence Sterne and came to America on impulse, to apply for a job advertised in a two-weeks-old copy of the *New York Herald* he found on a street in England. He has none of those undress glimpses of events in the making which seem demanded in the modern style of memoir; the book reveals no particular spiritual development, and the author's life has been spent in the intellectual vacuum of the advertising business, where a client could quite seriously object to a phrase about "niggardly buying" on the ground that it raised a race issue. Neither is the style anything to write home about. Nevertheless Mr. Fletcher has produced a volume of conversation about what goes on inside the head of an advertising man, more connected than Logan Pearsall Smith's "Trivia," which it most nearly resembles, and more epigrammatic than Amiel's "Journal," with which it has a bowing acquaintance. In fact, it is a whole volume of epigrams, usually very brilliant ones, which have a peculiar flavor of their own by reason of being concerned with such ordinarily bourgeois topics as the marketing of toilet soap.

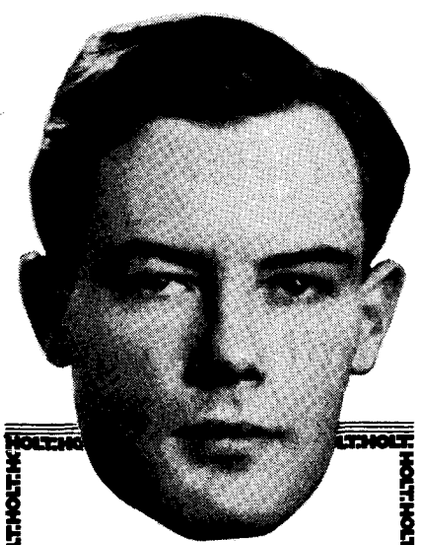
In addition, "Lucid Interval" has that extremely valuable characteristic of all books of good thinking, that it is less a book than a literature on the surface of which float argosies of ideas. Like most such it is sometimes slow reading; but never dull and frequently inspiring, if for no other reason than the great plug it gives the forgotten virtue of tolerance.

F. P.

THREE ROUSING CHEERS. By Elizabeth Jordan. Appleton-Century. 1938. $3.

Miss Jordan came out of a Milwaukee convent school to a job on the New York *World,* in the palmy days of the elder Pulitzer. From there she went to *Harper's Bazaar* as editor-in-chief; she was an enterprising and successful editor, with enough vitality left over after office hours to turn out a considerable quantity of stories, novels, and plays of her own. Her autobiography is full of good anecdotes about writers and other editors—Mark Twain and Henry James, Pulitzer and George Harvey, Frances Hodgson-Burnett and Sinclair Lewis; but in spite of her talent for apt characterization, nobody else in the book is anywhere near so alive as the author. Her comments on writers and writing will break no new ground for Ph.D. theses, but they are always lively and entertaining. To another editor, the best chapter is the disarming account of Miss Jordan's attempt to get a dozen of the best writers of the day (1906) to collaborate on a novel; each was to do a chapter, and the result was one of the most magnificent editorial headaches of the century. To anyone, it ought to be a pleasure to go through 400 pages with Miss Jordan, if only because she has had such a good time.

G. S.



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Fiction

THE DARK COMMAND. By W. R. Burnett. Knopf. 1938. $2.50.

We regret to say that we could get up only a moderate amount of interest in the latest novel by the author of "Little Caesar." The book seems to us just another story. Set in the days of bleeding Kansas and having as its main staple the cruelties of guerrilla warfare, the tale exhibits as its principal character the historic Quantrill, who appears as Cantrell, and who is opposed to the virtuous hero, one Johnny. Cantrell runs off with Johnny's girl to Kansas; Johnny follows; and most of the book pictures the alternation of attraction and repulsion between the girl and her two boy friends and between Cantrell and Johnny. It ends picturesquely with the death of the guerrilla chieftain.

We think the difficulty is that the book is at once too simple and not simple enough. It is too simple in the sense that the psychological tangle into which the three principal characters get themselves is more abstruse than the art of Mr. Burnett allows for. Johnny does nothing except follow along, and it is hard to see why the girl should care for him at all (which, it is true, she mostly does not), or what he is or does to justify his remaining central to the story at moments when we would be much more interested in Cantrell. And it is not simple enough in the sense that "The Dark Command" is not content to be a tale of derringers, pillaging, and a general Walter-Scott-cum-Harrison-Ainsworth melodrama. Mr. Burnett accepts considerable responsibility for Kansas. Kansas, it seems, was in a bad way, and we are to understand the importance of Kansas coming out on the right side. Which Kansas did in fact, but history doesn't help the progress of the narrative very much.

On the whole the texture of the book is thin, and none of the characters rise into three-dimensional significance.

H. M. J.

CARDBOARD CASTLE. By Percival Christopher Wren. Houghton Mifflin. 1938. $2.

Lady Calderton lives in a cardboard castle because the husband she believes has been dead for more than fifteen years returns after she has accumulated another husband and produced a son. This makes Lady Calderton a bigamist and the son a . . . as Mr. Wren delicately puts it. After much suspense and reiteration, the son resolves the difficulty.

"Cardboard Castle" is not up to the standard Wren set with "Beau Geste." Too many words are said about too little, and Wren is in one of his holier moods. But as usual he nearly redeems himself with his villain, the most important and attractive character in the book.

M. S.

MEMORY OF YOUTH. By Vilhelm Moberg. Simon & Schuster. 1938. $2.50.

Vilhelm Moberg, in this first volume of what is to be a trilogy, begins his description of the life and analysis of the soul of Knut Toring. It opens with Toring as a man of thirty-five, a successful literary editor in Stockholm, obsessed with nostalgia for the scenes, scents, and activities of the small hamlet in the province of Smaland where he was born. His peasant blood and his peasant instincts are pulling him back to the soil: his well-paid profession, and his wife and children, rivet him to the barren artificiality of the metropolis. The second section cuts back to this childhood, and the third to his youth, in Smaland.

Moberg writes with an even powerfulness. He depicts the child's curiosities and sense of injustice, the youth's tentative experiments with sex, religion, and alcohol, and finally the young man's fulfillment in mental and physical maturity, and his departure from the hateful restrictions whose background he is, years later, to recall with a longing which has become a phobia.

Toring is a split personality, equally divided between the city and the country. He suffers all the time; and the effect

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on the reader, intensified by the very evenness of the exposition, is oppressive. Although the book is not without bits of mordant wit, it is essentially humorless.

"Memory of Youth" is a serious piece of work, well executed by a first-class writer who has already won the "Bonniers Prize" three times. Although his novels have been published in six foreign languages, this one—excellently translated by Edwin Björkman—is the first to appear in English, and it will, and should, win the esteem of those who recognize genuine literary merit. It is complete as it stands, but since it is to be followed by two more volumes, it is unfair to assume that the oppression will never lift: that Toring's egotism will never be penetrated. If the ultimate resolution is as masterfully presented as this preparation for it, Moberg will have accomplished a far from ordinary achievement.

A. R.

TURN BACK THE RIVER. By W. G. Hardy. Dodd, Mead. 1938. $2.50.

Mr. Hardy's effort is to modernize ancient history by means of such startling introductions as the strip tease, night clubs, silk negligees, dope addicts, and conversations about communism. None of these except the last is quite such an anachronism as might appear at first glance, but all are made to look so by the emphasis placed upon them. It is rather more serious that the author should turn his heroine, the lady Clodia, from the salon figure of history into an ardent feminist, intriguing for power and revenge; but this can be pardoned as literary license. There does not, however, seem to be any license for dumping each of the great figures of the period of the fall of the republic onto the stage out of a machine, having him explain his character and purposes in a few words and then wheel off, upper right, to stand in a wardrobe till needed for another explanation.

F. P.

Miscellaneous

CHINA FIGHTS FOR HER LIFE. By H. R. Ekins and Theon Wright. Whittlesey House. 1938. $2.75.

There is perennial demand for a stream-lined version of Oriental affairs —one that is easy, readable, painless. Two journalists with Far Eastern experience have essayed this task in a volume which carries events up to the recent months of Sino-Japanese hostilities. They skim the high spots of China's recent history, draw the background since 1900 in broad strokes, and set down a rapid-fire narrative of the events and personalities of the last few significant years. They contribute a discriminating analysis of the character and policies of Chiang Kai-shek, tracing back the influences that have molded his development over the course of two decades. Like many others, they recognize that Chiang Kai-shek's qualities never stood China in such good stead as during the present national emergency.

Judgments are freely expressed. Many of these may be disputed, but all are provocative and contribute to the liveliness of the book. Haste in composition is betrayed by a number of inaccuracies, both as to dates and facts. The authors occasionally seize on the gist of an issue with sure intuition, as when they state that the Kuomintang-Communist *rapprochement* will mean the democratization of China. They might have added that it doomed Japan's prospects of successful conquest in China. One important correction should be made—the translation of *kang jih* is "resist Japan," not "fight Japan." This Chinese slogan was in response to a stimulus—six years of unremitting Japanese aggression. China was not unified by "a hymn of hate" against Japan; it was forced into unity, almost against its will, in order to preserve its national existence. A well-selected list of appendices completes this volume.

T. A. B.

Letters to the Editor

(*Continued from page* 9)

remark that "all quotations are supported by reference to the source" needs qualification; he gives no authority, for example, for the very interesting words of Nelson quoted on page 136. As for his "84 pages of appendictical matter," 42 of them consist of a list of the ships of the Navy, which gives us not the slightest hint of the sources from which it was compiled; and this, combined with the fact that inspection reveals inaccuracies in it (they are particularly notable in connection with the lake operations of 1812-14), means that no student can rely on it. In connection with the omission of page references to sources, I sympathize with Mr. Pratt in his difficulties with his publishers, but this hardly affects the point that the omission is a bad blot on the book's usefulness.

I must confess myself puzzled by Mr. Pratt's remarks on the Barataria affair. He writes, "the text of my book does not mention any attack"; yet on page 220 we read of Patterson, "He had a force of small schooners and gunboats; with them, raided Barataria, the pirate isle. . . ." These seem to me strange words in which to describe a simple "visit"; the description fits the operation of September, 1814; nor did it occur to me that a book sub-titled "The Story of a Service in Action" would omit an actual offensive operation while including a mere unfriendy call.

On the Spanish War, Mr. Pratt completely misstates my position. It is not the war itself that I report him as calling "basically the Spaniards' own fault." The reference is to a specific act, the destruction of the *Maine;* it is of this that he writes (page 363) "whosoever [sic] the blame for the immediate overt act, the true fault lay with Spain." In other words, the Spaniards were to blame for the sinking of the *Maine,* even if she was blown up by people who were not Spaniards at all! This seems to me a trifle hard on the Dons. My point was made, moreover, by no means "to bolster up an accusation of error" (as will be clear to anyone who reads the paragraph in question) but simply to suggest that the book's interpretation is colored by an undue national bias which to me (rightly or wrongly) seems out of place in a work having pretensions as serious history.

In connection with Mr. Pratt's final paragraph, I must point out that in quoting my characterization of his book he overlooks an important phrase: "he adds little to our knowledge." I hope for the appearance, some day, of a history of the Navy on the extended scale which the subject deserves: which will give us an authentic picture both of its internal development and its battles, based not only on the standard authors (all of them) and the printed sources, but also on the manuscripts, which Mr. Pratt has passed by. The writing of such a work would probably be an unremunerative as well as a very lengthy task; yet I cannot help feeling that energy would be somewhat better expended upon it than upon the multiplication of such books as the present one.

C. P. Stacey.

Princeton, N. J.

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HARVARD JUNIOR desires position as tutor-companion during summer. Proficient all sports. Experienced driver. Personable. References exchanged. Box 564-C.

TINY BUT TIRELESS, homely but not too humble; fine family but few finances,—expert, experienced typist-stenographer-bookkeeper would like interesting work with intelligent people. Box 636-C.

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PERSONALS

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RACINE, WIS.—Anybody here, circa 27, with mental life and sense of fun? Box 657-C.

YOUNG WOMAN, 35, unencumbered, graduate Catholic College, desires Summer position. Box 656-C.

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PERSONALS

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YOUNG MAN desires position for traveling abroad this summer, as companion or secretary. References exchanged. Box 652-C.

MICHIGAN TEACHER, thirty, seeks suitable summer work, ready June first, free to go anywhere. Box 651-C.

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PERSONABLE WOMAN, thirty, seeks position companion, dressmaker, light housework or clerical in doctor's office. New York, New Jersey, or New England. Gretchen.

IF YOU ARE interested in the Quest of the Holy Grail, a delightful correspondence awaits you. Address inquiries to International Grail Fellowship, Box 580, Columbus, Mississippi.

MAN IN 40's who still thinks he can write wants existence job any kind anywhere that will leave him some energy to keep trying. Would probably shine best at writing, Nature tutoring (especially trees, bugs, birds, snakes and elementary astronomy), dryfly tying-casting, bird-dog training or what-have-you. Qualifications: health, years of writing experience including metropolitan newspaper reporting, a lot of useless information, a desire to work, a more discriminating taste in poetry than food, and no thirst. Extra charge for listening to the radio. Any reference except a minister's, including honorable discharge old northwest mounted police. Box 669-C.

SANCTUARY OFFERED two or three tired business or professional men, 50-60, Oct. 1, '38, in old home in Southern college town. Quiet; comfortable. Library. Lawn; trees; birds. "Mammy" cook. Reasonable rates. References exchanged. Box 670-C.

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SUBLET June to October—Small, airy apartment, east-river view, two bedrooms, living-room, kitchenette, books, radio. Box 663-C.

I PLANTED another plum tree last night; what did you do? Cousin Kate.

Double-Crostics: No. 214

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

1-A	2-C		3-W	4-N	5-O	6-D	7-U		8-A	9-Q	10-I	11-H	12-G		13-B	14-E
15-H		16-N	17-D	18-R	19-K	20-J		21-Y	22-D	23-K		24-F	25-P	26-V	27-M	28-B
29-V	30-E		31-Q	32-I		33-L	34-E	35-S		36-B	37-T	38-O	39-U	40-M		41-W
42-N	43-P	44-Q		45-F	46-S	47-Q		48-T	49-X	50-C	51-D	52-Z	53-A		54-N	55-V
56-O	57-Y		58-E	59-Q		60-K	61-G	62-D	63-V		64-G	65-Q	66-S	67-E	68-R	69-I
70-L		71-C	72-S	73-Y	74-O	75-U		76-L	77-P	78-H	79-W	80-M	81-U	82-Y	83-Q	
84-S	85-X	86-I	87-N		88-M	89-Y	90-V		91-X	92-V	93-Y	94-P	95-A	96-E		97-Z
98-A	99-S	100-K		101-E	102-M	103-S		104-Y	105-E		106-Z	107-O	108-U	109-K	110-H	111-N
	112-W		113-R	114-J	115-F	116-G	117-O	118-I	119-L	120-B		121-W	122-R		123-L	
124-D	125-Z	126-J	127-S	128-F	129-R		130-E	131-Y	132-L	133-Z		134-F		135-C	136-J	137-L
138-A	139-R	140-M		141-R	142-I	143-B	144-Y	145-G	146-J	147-O	148-Q		149-H	150-B	151-L	
152-X	153-T		154-P	155-Q	156-R		157-C	158-I	159-B		160-K	161-T		162-C	163-O	164-V
	165-G	166-L	167-E	168-Q	169-J	170-B	171-P		172-F	173-R	174-H	175-G				

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 24 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Anything extraordinary in size (slang).

B. Search into, investigate.

C. Margin or room for action.

D. American musician and poet (1842-81).

E. Son and successor of Saul.

F. One of The Three Musketeers.

G. Bordering.

H. American general killed at Bunker Hill.

I. Body of methodological doctrine.

J. Marked with sinuate and irregular furrows.

K. Destitute (with of).

L. Commentator; annotator.

M. Speedy in flight.

N. Carry too far.

O. Causing to face in an opposite direction.

P. Notwithstanding that.

Q. Having high or noble principles (comp.).

R. In a self-important manner.

S. Fifteenth century morality play.

T. Norse god of strength.

U. Instruct and improve.

V. Recommits; sends back.

W. Muscular strength.

X. Famous English boys' school.

Y. French poet and politician (1790-1869).

Z. Place of oblivion.

WORDS

53 1 8 138 98 95

143 170 159 150 36 28 13 120

50 2 71 162 157 135

51 17 22 62 6 124

58 30 34 130 67 105 14 96 167 101

134 128 45 172 115 24

116 61 145 12 175 165 64

149 78 174 110 15 11

10 142 69 86 32 118 158

114 169 126 146 20 136

100 19 60 109 160 23

119 76 70 166 137 132 123 151 33

140 102 40 80 27 88

4 16 111 87 54 42

117 107 5 38 74 147 163 56

25 77 43 94 171 154

168 155 83 65 9 31 59 47 148 44

113 139 156 141 173 68 129 18 122

127 72 35 66 84 103 99 46

161 48 153 37

39 7 81 108 75

26 55 29 92 63 90 164

121 3 112 41 79

85 152 49 91

57 21 144 104 131 93 89 82 73

97 125 133 106 52

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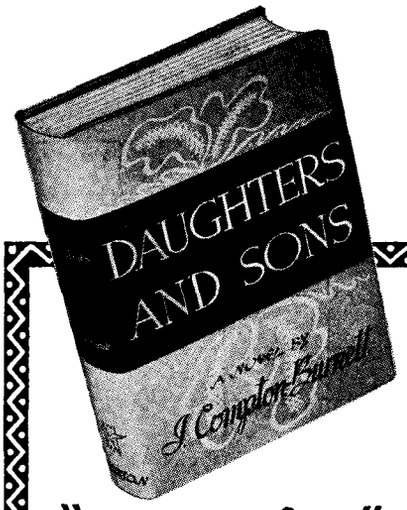

"... genius"

"I don't think that 'genius' is a word to be thrown around, but I am sure that I. Compton-Burnett has some of it; and I am quite sure that *this book deserves to be called a masterpiece,*" writes GEORGE DANGERFIELD in *The Saturday Review* of

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

AMONG the interesting books in Part 2 of the Cortlandt F. Bishop Sale at the American-Anderson Galleries was a volume of Dr. Johnson's *The Idler* (1761) with the following inscription, *Given to Esther Burney by the venerable Author, she sitting upon his lap at the time.* ☞Esther Burney was the sister of Frances Burney; it might be added that she was ten years old at that date. ☞Another notable item in the Bishop collection was Herman Melville's copy of Chase's *Narrative of the Whale-Ship Essex* (published 1821), supposed to have given him the idea of *Moby Dick.* ☞This book, however, was not the first in which he read of the *Essex* (which was sunk by a whale). Readers of *Redburn* will remember Melville's description of his first voyage, at the age of 17. In the focsle of the ship *Highlander* he found three books: one was about Delirium Tremens, one was Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations,* and the third was "an account of shipwrecks and disasters at sea." ☞We have always believed that this volume was *The Mariner's Chronicle: Containing Narratives of the Most Remarkable Disasters at Sea,* a copy of which lies before us. It was published in New Haven by Durrie and Peck, 1834, and includes the story of the *Essex* as told by her skipper, Captain Pollard. ☞The *Book Collector's Packet* has resumed publication after a four-year layoff. It is designed and published by Norman Forgue of the Black Cat Press, Chicago, and edited by that vigorous young bibliophile Irvin Haas at 581 Snediker Avenue, Brooklyn. The April issue contains an amusing confession by Vincent Starrett, who remarks that the *Toronto Globe of* Oct. 25, 1886 is for him the most important piece of print. When Mr. Starrett was born he was thought to be dead and was thrust under the bed wrapped in that newspaper. Subsequently, we are glad to hear, he showed signs of vitality and was unwrapped and properly published.

☞Further news of the A. B. A. Convention, which will take place May 15-17 at the Hotel Pennsylvania, N. Y. C.—on Sunday afternoon the booksellers will make a trip to Sing Sing, with Warden Lawes as host. Other features include a Fair Trade luncheon, a "Bookman's Holiday" party, and of course the banquet. Many interesting topics will be up for discussion at the business meetings.

☞Two distinguished librarians widely known in their profession will retire from active service at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, in June. These are Mr. Edward F. Stevens and Miss Josephine Rathbone, director and vice-director of the Pratt Institute Library School since 1911. Their successors, Mr. W. W. Shirley and Miss Agnes Hansen, are both graduates of the same well-known school. ☞Princeton University Press has announced with regret the resignation of Paul Tomlinson, who has served as director of the Press for 20 years. During that time 317 books have been published under the Princeton imprint. The late Charles Scribner (Princeton '75) gave the Press its present building and equipment in 1911. ☞The new appointee in this important post, beginning July 1st, is Joseph A. Brandt, formerly a Rhodes Scholar from Oklahoma, then city editor of the Tulsa *Tribune,* and since 1928 editor of publications at the University of Oklahoma. His energetic work as founder of the University Press at Oklahoma has been widely noticed. The latter remains the only university press which has won a Book-of-the-Month Club selection (*Wah-Kon-Tah,* by J. J. Mathews, 1932). ☞Applications are due for membership in the MacDowell Colony of Peterboro, New Hampshire. This woodland community where each writer or artist has a studio of his own to work in has been the birthplace of much important literature.

☞The American Autograph Shop, Merion Station, Pa., lists five boxes of correspondence (about 2500 letters) written to Albert Bigelow Paine by leading authors, artists and public persons through the past 40 years. Listed at $625 this sounds to us like remarkably interesting stuff, including much material about Mark Twain and Howells. ☞Never reproach a Homing Pigeon prematurely. The B. O. (viz. Business Office) has just shown us a Charter Subscriber Return Postcard, sent out by the *S. R. L.* in 1924, and just come back to us from New Weston, Ohio. It is time for our annual reminder that a subscription to the *S. R. L.* is an ideal Graduation Present. ☞One of the pleasantest arrivals in the mail lately was a little card which said simply: *G. A. Borgese, American Citizen. Chicago, April 12, 1938.* ☞Any civilized nation needs more citizens like Professor Borgese (do you know his fine book, *Goliath*?) and we congratulate the U. S. A.

☞The recent Final Exam in English 74 at the University of Minnesota, conducted by Tremaine McDowell, consisted in part of imaginary PERSONALS (authors to be identified) suggested by the Bowling Green of March 12. Mr. McDowell writes "Undergraduates found this examination amusing, and are grateful." ☞A small chaste birth-card announces the approaching swaddle of *Connecticut Nutmeg,* a weekly, at P. O. Box 1087, New Canaan, Conn. Among its numerous parents are listed Heywood Broun, John Erskine, Gene Tunney, Jack Pegler, George Bye, Ursula Parrott.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 213)

KENNETH GRAHAME:
"THE GOLDEN AGE."

I had no words to describe that earth-effluence of which I was so conscious. . . . I dug glad heels into the squelching soil; I splashed diamond showers from puddles with a stick; . . . and presently I found myself singing.

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